Grammatical Errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language Creative Essays at Sekgosese North Circuit, Vhembe West District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

by

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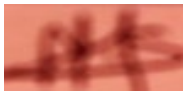
DECLARATION

I, Ṋemathithi Sandani, student no [redacted], declare that the study **"Grammatical Errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative Essays at Sekgosese North Circuit, Vhembe West District Limpopo Province, South Africa"** is my work and that I have not submitted it previously at this institution or any other institution. I confirm that all the sources used in this study have been fully acknowledged.

Student`s signature:  Date: 30/01/2025

Supervisor`s signature: Date: 30/01/2025

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my children; Begiwa Mulweli Jessie, Begiwa Tshanduko Justin and Begiwa Munei Innocent, my mother Muavha Florah and all language lovers.

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First, I put Him first, my wonderful Creator, for always giving me power and strength. To my supervisor Mr. Mandoma TJ, I am so grateful for his patience throughout the study. Special thanks to my precious parents Flora Muavha and N̂emathithi Philemon Vhalwane for bringing me up to this far. It is through their love and kindness that I am furthering my studies at the University of Limpopo. Their support kept me persuaded. To my kids Begiwa Mulweli Jessie, Begiwa Tshanduko Justin and Begiwa Munei Innocent, I appreciate the support that you gave me by understanding when I was not spending more time with you during this study. To my leader (principal) Mr Luvhengo RJ, who made me realize the importance of completing my studies and ensuring that he gives me full support through understanding when I ask for leave during my studies, I am grateful. Lastly, I want to thank myself for being me, for being patient even when it is not easy.

ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language Creative Essays. The nature of the study and type of data collected motivated the researcher to use a qualitative approach. This study adopted communicative competence theory. The interpretivism paradigm necessitated the use of qualitative approach and case study design to understand the experiences and opinions of participants regarding grammatical error challenges when learners write creative essays. The researcher used three data collection instruments, namely, structured interview, non-participant observation and document review. The data collected were analyzed thematically. The most common grammatical challenges unearthed were capitalization, punctuation and spelling. The main contributing factors to these challenges were the shortage of resources, the excessive use of social media by learners, insufficient practice by learners, failure to implement the main principles of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement and poor classroom management due to overcrowding. To lessen the gravity of this problem, the researcher suggested few recommendations, and some of them are: building of school libraries to mitigate the shortage of grammar books, parental involvement in their children's education, installation of grammar app on learners' smartphones, extra lessons and extended opportunities be made available for learners and implementing Drop all and Read programme.

Key words: **Grammatical errors, Mechanical errors, Creative essays, Curriculum and Assessment**

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. Background and Motivation

Writing is a skill that forms an essential part of communication. This skill enables people to communicate with each other without physical contact and still have their messages communicated clearly. According to Reichelt, (2016) writing is done for different purposes within different genres or types of texts, such as a report, a press release, essays, and resume. However, all writing within these texts or genres must be free of grammatical errors to make sense and intended impact to the readers. The error free writing must also apply when learners write creative essays in their schoolwork. There are many studies that researchers conduct to find solutions of the array of challenges that learners come across in their schoolwork. In this study, the researcher explored grammatical challenges encountered by Grade 7 learners when writing creative essays. Some of the grammatical errors that Grade 7 learners committed during creative essay writing include wrong use of punctuation, spelling errors, inability to apply capitalization and poor vocabulary. Due to these problems, learners lose marks when it comes to essays, and this leads to poor performance on language as a subject.

Tati (2016) conducted a study showing fifteen categories of errors where spelling, punctuation, and capitalization were commonly found. According to Mohammed (2016), learners are still facing a problem on spelling, punctuation, and capitalization which is causing poor performance. He further states that, if there can be guidance, exposure, reading, and practicing, learners can better understand punctuation, capitalization and spelling in their English written essays. Therefore, this means that many efforts should be paid from teachers to help the learners to achieve the desired level of proficiency in using punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. According to Anthony (2017), sometimes a grammatical error is called errors usage, which refers to any instance of inaccurate, unconventional, or controversial usage, such as a subject-verb disagreement or an inappropriate verb tense. Additionally, Oyewale, (2024) claims that essay is a focused piece of writing designed to inform or persuade.

In a nutshell, essay is a piece of writing that is written to assure someone of something or to inform the reader about a specific topic. Thus, if learners make grammatical errors, their essays will not inform readers of anything. Since there are grammatical errors when Grade 7 learners write creative essays, the reader (teacher) can interpret the writings in a wrong way–resulting in learners' under-performance. At a selected school, learners face grammatical error challenges, and this exposes them to the vulnerability of poor performance especially in Tshivenda Home Language creative essays. Parents and other people outside school do not understand why learners are under-performing in language. This is because Tshivenda language is their mother tongue. Therefore, the public expects learners to know Tshivenda Home Language better without considering the challenges faced by learners in writing the language. Creative essay is one of the tasks in which learners need to perform very well because they are required to express their thoughts. However, due to grammatical errors that they make, learners fail to express their thoughts clearly in creative essays. Writing is one of the skills a person needs to excel throughout the schooling system.

According to Nkgadima (2022), learners who experience grammatical errors when writing, tend to have problems even in some situations where they are supposed to write other types of texts which must communicate a clear message. As such, writing skills become a critical skill in that situation. Therefore, it is important for the learners to write documents without grammatical errors. In that regard, the researcher deems this study necessary because this problem needs to be resolved. Different scholars and researchers conducted research about grammatical error challenges when learners write creative essays, but the literature is not sufficient because the error free essay writing challenge by Grade 7 learners persists. Much research that was conducted did not come up with adequate solutions, because learners still commit grammatical errors when writing creative essays. Therefore, this is the reason and rationale why this study is conducted.

1.2. Research problem

The researcher has noticed that Tshivenda Home Language Grade 7 learners from selected school at Sekgosese North circuit, Vhembe West district commit numerous

grammatical errors when writing creative essays. These make their writings unreadable and unable to communicate an intended message. It has been observed that learners commit grammatical errors such as spelling errors, wrong usage of punctuation and incorrect use of capital letters. Due to these errors, learners are prone to poor performance in Tshivenda Home Language. According to Rachel and Mohamad (2019), due to challenges faced by learners in writing, learning to write is difficult, for learners to perform well in a language, they need to master grammar usage. However, due to their grammatical incompetence, learners continue to face difficulties of writing meaningful creative essays. The researcher identified the problem under investigation through direct observation at the school where she is employed. Her engagement with colleagues further corroborated the existence of the issue. Additionally, the concern was validated by the Tshivenda Home Language curriculum advisor, Mrs. Lukoto, during a support visit to the school. She highlighted learners' difficulties with grammatical accuracy, particularly in the context of creative essay writing. According to her report, learners frequently committed grammatical errors in their written work. This observation was further supported by an analysis of Home Language assessment results at the school, which revealed consistently poor learner performance in creative essay tasks. Based on these findings, the researcher contends that this issue warrants systematic investigation, as it has significant implications for learners' overall performance in Tshivenda Home Language, especially in creative writing.

1. 3. Aim and Objectives of the study

1. 3.1. Aim

The aim of the study is to explore grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language Creative Essays.

1.3.2. Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is supported by the following objectives:

- To identify the types of written grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays.

- To establish whether educators apply the main principles of CAPS policy when teaching writing skills.
- To determine the causes of grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 Tshivenda Home Language learners.
- To recommend ways in which Grade 7 Tshivenda Home Language learners can improve their writing skills.

1.4. Research questions

- What are the types of grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays?
- How do Grade 7 educators apply the main principles of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) inside their classroom?
- Which factors contribute to grammatical errors that learners commit when they are writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays?
- What strategies can be used to improve Grade 7 learners' competency in grammar proficiency when they write Creative Essays?

1.5. Significance of the study

The researcher hopes that this study is helpful and of utmost importance to the following stakeholders:

- This research will help learners to improve their writing skills in a way that they write proper creative essays, and they perform well as they do not make grammatical errors due to the awareness of grammar rules.
- Educators, not only from the chosen school, but even other schools, whose learners also experience the challenge of grammatical errors when writing creative essays will be helped through this research.
- Learners' parents will benefit from this study as their learners will perform well at school, and they will be able to secure better future and become better members of the society.
- Curriculum advisors will use this research to identify grammatical errors experienced by learners and will be able to train educators on strategies pertaining how they can teach learners writing skills.

- Department of Basic Education will also benefit from this research as the pass rate of learners facing this challenge will increase, and resources (e.g., books) will be saved as there will be no need to use resources on the same learners because they would have progressed.

1.5. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

- **Chapter 1: introduction, background and research problem**

This is the first chapter in the study which outlines the structure of the entire research project. Chapter one outlines the background of the study and motivation, research problem, aim and objectives of the study and research questions. The last part in this chapter clarifies the significance of the study.

- **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter is delineated into two sections the first section of the chapter presents the role of the theory, wherein the main principles of Communicative Competence theory were expounded. The researcher contextualized the study and further explained how the theory helped to determine data collection instruments. The second part of this literature review explored the mechanical and grammatical error challenges experienced by Grade 7 learners when they write creative essays.

- **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

Chapter three presents the methodology used in this chapter in detail. However, all themes which were presented in this chapter were explained before in chapter one. The researcher explained paradigm, research approach, research design, sampling and population, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria, significance of the study and ethical considerations.

- **Chapter 4: Data Analysis and interpretation**

This chapter analyzes and interprets data collected, which makes it more important in the research because without this chapter, it means there will be no analysis and interpretation of collected data and findings would not be accumulated. Chapter 4

implemented ideas of various scholars cited in chapter two. This does not make other chapters not important.

- **Chapter 5: Summary of the research findings, recommendations and conclusion**

Chapter five is the last chapter in the entire study. This chapter summarizes the findings, gives recommendations and conclusion of the research project. Findings presented in this chapter were accomplished from the analysis gathered in chapter four and the recommendations that may be used to solve the problem in the study.

1.10. Conclusion

This chapter has introduced some of the most important sections of this research. Background and motivation shed light on why error free of any form of writing is critically important. The problem of this research was also precisely and clearly explained in this chapter. In a nutshell, the problem of the study related to Grade 7 learners who cannot write error free creative essays to an extent that the message they intent to communicate is impaired. The research used aim, underpinned by research objectives and questions. Ethical considerations were adhered to by asking permission from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee and the Limpopo Department of Basic Education. Consent forms were signed by all participants and parents of underage children. The children who cannot legally give consent signed assent form. Additionally, the researcher explained to the participants that their participation is voluntary, confidential and anonymous. Lastly, the researcher explained to the participants that they will be no material benefits and known risks involved in the research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Hart (2018), literature review is the process of evaluating and analyzing the synthesis of existing information related or relevant to the problem statement. To support this view Shahriari & Shadloo (2019) defines literature review as a scholarly survey about a specific topic. Furthermore, the purpose of literature review is to enable the researcher to collect data which is relevant to the topic. In this study, literature review is outlined in two major sections. The first section of the chapter presents the role of theory, wherein the main principles of Communicative Competence theory are expounded. The researcher contextualized the study and further explained how the theory helped to determine data collection instruments. The second part of this literature review explored literature from different scholars based on the following themes: creative essays, mechanical and grammatical error challenges experienced by Grade 7 learners when they write creative essays. This section is discussed under the following sub-themes: for Mechanical errors: spelling errors, incorrect capitalisation and proper nouns, and punctuations, while for grammatical errors the themes are tenses, Subject verb agreement, pronoun Disagreement, Faulty parallelism and conjunctions. Furthermore, the discussion continued under the causes of errors, how do grammatical errors affect learners` writing skills, challenges faced by learners in learning writing skills, the importance of teaching grammar in Tshivenda Home Language classes, Challenges faced by the teachers in teaching writing skills, how social media and dialects influence grammatical errors.

2.2. ROLE OF THEORY IN THE STUDY

This study adopted Communicative Competence Theory. This theory was developed by Hymes (1972). According to Hymes, Communicative competence theory of writing emphasizes that effective writing goes beyond just grammar and vocabulary. It involves understanding how to use language appropriately in different social contexts and for different purposes. This means that writers need to be aware of their audience, the purpose of their writing, and the genre they are writing in. That is, learners must know socio-linguistic competence. To support this view, Gray (2023) defines communicative competence as the capacity to use language in a

grammatically correct way in different and relevant social settings. The model of communicative competence deals with the practical parts of communication. Furthermore, it deals with the correct use of the organized structure of language. The Hymes (1972) theory emphasizes the ability to utilize language appropriately and effectively in different wring contexts. In this research, the communicative competence theory helped the researcher to unearth factors that contribute to grammatical challenges that Grade 7 learners experience when they try to master creative essay writing.

According to scholars like Canale and Chaine (1980), Hymes' theory has several main components: Linguistic competence, socio-linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence.

Linguistic competence is the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and the ability to utilize them appropriately in writing. In other words, to write meaningful sentences, learners must know the rules that govern the structure of sentences, formation of words, tenses, syntax, phonetics, semantics and phonology (Soelistiyowati, Permatasari, Nugroho, and Kusmulyadi, 2024). Other scholars like Usó-Juan, Martínez-Flor, and Palmer-Silveira (2006), argue that linguistic competence is an umbrella concept that encompasses fundamental elements of written communication such as vocabulary or lexicon, grammar rules, and conventions in mechanics. Regarding lexical resources, writers need to know elementary word meanings and how these meanings may differ depending on context. To use words, writers also need to become familiar with knowledge of grammatical structure. Thus, writers need to pay attention to form for them to learn the grammar rules underlying the syntactic relations, as well as the structure of clauses. Furthermore, writers' knowledge of mechanics is essential in writing since faulty punctuation, capitalization and spelling mistakes may result in an unreadable written text.

Discourse competence refers to the competency to organize and structure written messages logically and effectively, including using rhetorical devices and convincing techniques in written texts. Learners must be able to construct and organize words, phrases and sentences to come up with a document that can convey an intended message (Soelistiyowati, Permatasari, Nugroho, and Kusmulyadi, 2024). According to

Uso-Juan et al. (2006), discourse communicative competence framework has at its center the writing skill, since it is the manifestation of generating written discourse, as well as a way of manifesting the rest of the components. Furthermore, Discourse competence enables writers to use discourse attributes to achieve well-formed written text given a communicative objective and context in which it has to be written and this discourse attributes involve cohesion, coherence (and its markers) as well as formal schemata or knowledge of the structure of written genres. Thus, if writers are to create a coherent written text, they need first to plan the discourse features to be used and then relate them to a given communicative purpose and context. Consequently, during the process of producing a coherent written text, writers are expected to play an active role, since they must recruit their knowledge of how to produce linguistically and pragmatically error-free sentences.

From the two main components of this theory as discussed above, it is evident that learners must ensure that their writing is clear, concise, and effective, thus enabling them to communicate their message to their intended audience. Communicative competence allows learners to adapt their writing style to different contexts and audiences, making them more versatile communicators (Ahmed, 2023). Understanding the conventions of different genres (e.g., essay, report, email) is crucial for effective writing. Communicative competence helps writers (learners) to recognize and adapt to these conventions. Writing requires critical thinking, and communicative competence helps writers to develop the skills necessary for analyzing information, evaluating arguments, and formulating their own ideas in a clear and coherent way

Through communicative competency theory, learners are able to recognize lexical, syntactical, morphological and phonological features of language. Moreover, learners are able to use grammatical competency like spelling, sentence formation and vocabulary accurately. All these help the learners to write meaningful Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays that communicate a clear and intended massage.

2.3. Creative Essay

According to Nndwamato (2017), creative essays are all about expressing artistic style and imagination when writing. Most learners fail to be creative or able to respond

correctly when writing creative essays. This can be the result of poor language skills. According to Chen, Li and Cukurova, (2024), creative essays build a foundation for learners to develop good opportunities in their creative imagination and creative thinking. Learners who can write good creative essays can be able to express their point of view and be creative through various means. Johnson (2017) points out that poor writing skills can cause learners to write poorly in various ways such as poor grammar, unclear organization, and weak reasoning. Some learners, especially those who fail to respond to writing creative essays correctly, also fail to build their self-confidence and improve their well-being. Because of this issue, they lose marks in their writing tasks (essay writing).

2.3.1. TYPES OF CREATIVE ESSAYS

2.3.1.1. Argumentative essay

It is also called Persuasion essay. According to Caulfield (2023), an argumentative essay presents an extended, evidence-based argument. It requires a strong notion statement and a clearly defined stance on your topic. While, Tasya (2022) defines argumentative essay as a type of writing that presents a coherent and logical analysis of a specific topic. The main aim of this type of essay is to convince the reader to accept the writer's point of view or opinion on a particular issue. Caulfield (2023) claims that, argumentative essays test the writers` ability to research and present their own position on a topic. According to CAPS (2011), the main purpose of argumentative essay is to argue a case for a point of view and to attempt to convince the reader. This type of essay allows learners to think critically and do their research about the topic, so that they can outline strong point.

2.3.1.2. Narrative essay

A narrative essay refers to a way of testing writers' ability to tell a story in a clear and interesting manner (Caufield, 2023). He further states that narrative essays are usually a story about a personal experience someone had, but it may also be an imaginative and exploration of something a person had not experienced. Moreover, Caufield states that narrative essay helps to test learners` ability to build up a narrative in an engaging, well-structured way. Unlike other types of academic writing, narrative essays are much more personal and creative. The writer has a platform to tell a story or recount an

event from the writer`s perspective. According to Heryanti, Sucipto and Makmur (2017), in a narrative essay the writer should let creativity and ideas flow freely, although it should still be realistic.

2.3.1.3. Descriptive essay

According to Okono (2021), descriptive essays are a type of essay which focus on vivid imagery and sensory details, painting a picture for the reader through language. To support this view, Abdurahim, Santoso, and Harsiati, (2023) define descriptive essay as a type of essay which gives a vivid, detailed description of something like place or object, but possibly something more abstract like emotion. Furthermore, the author states that these kinds of essay test writers` ability on using language in an original or creative manner, to convey to the reader a memorable image of whatever the writer is describing. Unlike other academic writing, descriptive essay requires more creativity.

2.3.1.4. Expository essay

Collins, Ciullo, Graham, Sigafoos, Guerra, David, and Judd (2021) claim that an expository essay is an essay that communicates information. This type of essay writing, its main aim is to explain, clarify, and present information about a particular topic in a clear and concise manner (Long & Teopilus, 2023). To support the two scholars, Amayreh and Abdullah (2022), They define expository essay as a type of writing that aims to explain, clarify, or inform the reader about a specific topic. According to Rizaldi, Mukrim, and Hastini (2022), expository essay is characterized by its clear and concise presentation of facts and ideas, without the writer`s personal opinions or emotions influencing the content. Caufield (2020) states that expository essays are usually short assignments intended to test the writers` composition skills or understanding of a subject, tend to involve less research and original argument.

2.3.1.5. Reflective essay

Reflective essay is a personal writing where the author explores their thoughts, emotions, and experiences related to a particular topic or event, examining how it has shaped their perspective and potentially led to personal growth or understanding (Diers-Lawson, 2021). According to Livingstone (2019), reflective essay is an essay in

which the writer looks back on, or reflects upon his or her experiences and how they caused personal change. This kind of essay allows the writer to examine their own thoughts and feelings about their past experiences and express how those experiences have impacted them.

2.4. Mechanical errors

According to Yuliah, Widiastuti, and Meida (2019), mechanical errors pertain to the conventions of written language, such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Similarly, Oguan and Del Valle (2022) state that mechanical errors involve mistakes in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. They further emphasize that these types of errors are among the most common in writing, regardless of whether the writer is a native speaker or not. Since mechanics are an essential component of writing, learners rely on them in their essays to convey their intended messages more clearly (Fitria, 2022). Therefore, this study also focuses on mechanical aspects, including capitalization, punctuation, and spelling:

*2.4.1. S*pelling errors

Spelling error is when learners commit writing errors in some words character (Nkgadima, 2022). For example, learners may add or substitute a letter in the word that alters the meaning of a word and thus of a sentence. As a result, some sentences do not convey correct meaning to the readers. A common error that appears in written text is character and misspelling. Research shows that misspelled words interfere with lexical processing during normal reading (Kuperman, Bar-On, Bertram, Boshra, Deutsch, Kyröläinen, Mathiopoulou, Oralova, and Protopapas., 2021). Many learners around schools are facing huge challenges regarding grammatical errors because they cannot spell some words correctly. Although spelling errors affect writing skill, it also affects reading skill among learners. Kuperman, et el…, 2021) claims that reading comprehension and word recognition is negatively affected by misspelled characters. Poor spelling is one of the issues that hinder Tshivenḓa Home Language Grade 7 learners from a chosen school to write readable creative essays.

Daffern and Mackenzie (2020), concur that challenge in learning writing skill is poor spelling of words. If learners can spell words correctly, they can also develop good

grammar. According to Afri & Putra (2021), incorrect grammar can also be influenced by spelling errors and improper pronunciation of words. Learners from chosen school also commit the same errors because when the current researcher (as an educator) read their creative essays, she found that some of the sentences that learners write were grammatically incorrect.

Alhaisoni, Al-Zuoud, and Gaudel (2015) conducted the study which shows the types of spelling errors in English First Additional Language. The study was conducted with 122 English first Additional Language undergraduate students at the University of Hail in Saudi Arabia. Students were given a task to write, and they were 53 males and 69 females. According to data collected on the study, it shows that omission errors are considered the highest among those students. Majority of spelling errors are categorized as wrong use of vowels from the study. This simply tells us that a lot of learners are struggling with spelling errors which cause them to commit grammatical errors. When writing, it is important to understand that if you make a mistake of spelling, the meaning of the word or sentences will be misinterpreted by the reader or sometimes becomes meaningless, which leads to grammatical errors.

Hameed (2016) conducted a study about spelling errors committed by Saudi students when writing in English. During the study, it was revealed that spelling errors is one of the main issues they are experiencing. The study was conducted with 26 students who were learning English First Language at the University. Data were collected through dictation of fifty-words. The findings of the study show that students were committing errors on the following aspects: vowel sounds, diphthongs and words containing silent letters. In addition, mother-tongue knowledge was applied by students during English learning experience. Also, the findings of that study indicate that the highest errors committed by students are: substitution, omission, transposition and insertion. This study was in line with the study of Benyo (2014) which was explored at Dongola University focusing on the first-year students. The study looked at spelling errors challenges as well. Data were collected from 200 English First Language students from different faculties. Students were given pre-intervention test during first semester and post-intervention test was given after two months of the second semester. Findings of the study show that students were facing challenges with vowels sounds and several sounds of English Language which do not exist in Arabic. The study

findings also show that over-generalization of English Language spelling rules might be another primary cause of spelling error committed by Sudanese students as they were not familiar with over-generalization.

2.4.2. Incorrect capitalization and proper nouns

Johnson (2017) defines capitalization as the use of uppercase letters at the beginning of a word and the rest of the letters in the word remain lowercase. Phatan (2021) defines capitalization as the use of capital letters, also referred to as uppercase letter. Nowak and Hartmann (2024) point out that capitalization is important in writing English Language, as it makes communication effective, clear, and impressive. It gives the written work a standard and distinctive appearance. Wrong interpretation in any forms of writing by readers can be prevented by capitalization. A capital letter is used at the beginning of a sentence or at the beginning of a proper noun (Phatan, 2021). Majority of learners from various schools seem not to understand how to apply the capitalization rules when writing their schoolwork. This is caused by writing words that are not proper nouns using initial capital letters. On the other hand, learners do not use initial capital letters when they write proper nouns. Phatan (2021) conducted a study about capitalization and claims that one of the challenges in writing for students learning English First Language (EFL) is capitalization. Students use capitalization improperly in their essays, and this affects their writing skills. Phatan (2021) further states that the problem of incorrect capitalization confuses students as they cannot differentiate capital and small letters, and do not know when to use the two when writing. When writing a proper noun, learners should start with a capital letter, whether such name is written at the beginning, end, or in the middle of a sentence. According to Klionsky (2016), a proper noun abbreviates the names of people, places and acts.

Hinnon (2014) conducted a study on Thai English Language learners. In the study, the findings indicate that the primary causes of capitalization error among learners, are caused by negative transfer of language dialect and the difference between words and sentences structure of the target language. Learners learning Thai Language have a problem because in Thai language, they do not use capital letter, whereas in languages such as Tshivenda Home Language they are expected to use capital letters. This is supported by Sermsook (2017) when conducting a study about the

causes of capitalization errors. The findings indicate that main cause of this issue is the interference of the Thai language because there is no rule of capitalization in Thai context. Furthermore, the findings show that participants in the study had inadequate knowledge of the English language rule in the first letter of nouns and the first letter of a sentence must be capitalized. The researcher believes that some learners become confused and not aware when to apply capital letter due to Thai language they learn.

The findings of the study conducted by Challay and Jones (2019) at Bo Municipality, Southern Sierra Leone in Western Africa's secondary schools outlined that, learners from three schools are not aware of the rules which are supposed to be applied when using capital letter, due to the fact that the researcher agreed that a lot of learners are committing capital errors when writing proper nouns. This is caused by poor background knowledge of letter shapes, over-generalization and not capitalizing the first word.

2.4.3. Punctuation

According to Nordquist (2020), *punctuation* is the group of marks which is useful to regulate texts and clarifies the meanings of those texts, mostly by separating or linking words, phrases, and clauses. To produce a good text, punctuation marks must be used correctly as they make the writers to express their ideas clearly and sentences to flow smoothly. When punctuation is used correctly, it means that sentences are clear and ideas are separated. Learners are unable to use punctuation marks correctly, which causes them to produce poor writing. Some of the punctuation which can be used during the writings are as follows:

2.4.3.1. Full stop

This type of punctuation is used at the end of a sentence (Nkgadima, 2022). Learners become ignorant to use full stop where it is supposed to be placed. The researcher believes that some learners are aware of where they are supposed to place this kind of punctuation mark, but they become careless. Learners need to be taught about the issue they create when they do not put full stop where it is required in their writings. Learners fail to place a full stop as a symbol to mark the end of the sentence when writing creative essays. This creates a huge problem for them when one investigates

their ability to separate ideas in sentences. Van Geyte (2013) says that learners' inability to use punctuation such as full stop is a demonstration of poor writing skill and it is inappropriate in academic essays.

2.4.3.2. Comma

Comma is used to separate two or more ideas and list of items, or to indicate a pause in the writing (Nkgadima, 2022). Most learners at school incorrectly use a comma to separate two sentences which do not carry the same idea, nor support each other. Amoakohene (2017) emphasizes that learners who face grammatical errors may be struggling with wrong use of punctuation marks such as a comma. Comma is one of the punctuation marks which have been misused. According to Nkgadima (2022), learners fail to use comma where it is supposed to be utilized when writing. When a comma is used correctly, there is a prevention of confusion and it means that there will be a relationship between sentence parts and ideas (Nndwamato, 2017). The researcher believes that in order to produce an appealing sentence, it means that a comma should be used in fairness.

2.4.3.3. Misuse of exclamation mark

Eric (2012) states that exclamation is another example of punctuation mark which is used mostly after interjection. It is used to show emphasis and indicate strong feeling. Exclamation mark is one of the punctuations which is being misused when writing. When writing, exclamation mark can be used to express strong emotions such as anger, astonishment, and excitement. When learners write their tasks, they use exclamation mark to create emphasis in writing. When exclamation mark is used correctly, it creates a massive impact in a text. Readers can undermine the emotions behind your message if exclamation mark is used excessively. Nkgadima (2022) when conducting a study, the findings indicated that learners omitted exclamation mark at the end of words showing emotions. Some of the words which learners put exclamation mark on were supposed to express emotions such as ouch! and oops!

2.4.3.4. Semicolon

Semicolon is one of the punctuations marks which learners use during their writings. According to Barton (2024), semicolon is used to connect two independent clauses which are closely related and to separate items which contain punctuation such as commas and dashes as internal punctuation. Although they are expected to utilize this punctuation, they are however struggling. Learners are afraid to use it, unlike period or comma simply because they are scared to make mistakes. Nkgadima (2022) claims that learners commit mistakes when using semicolon as they fail to add a semi-colon to avoid the syntactic error where the first clause runs on into the next. The researcher believes that this could be the reason why they are afraid to use this type of punctuation, because they are not knowledgeable enough about the rules of utilizing it during their writings.

2.4.3.5. Hyphen

According to Klionsky (2016) hyphen is a punctuation mark used to connect two or more words to show that they form one unit of sense. When two or more words are joined using hyphen, we call it hyphenated component. Learners make a lot of mistakes when using hyphen punctuation. Sometimes they even ignore to use this punctuation while it is required. Learners make common mistakes when using hyphen punctuation. They leave them out when they are required or add them when it is not necessary. Furthermore, he mentioned that other learners put hyphen in the wrong place during their writings (Klionsky, 2016). The above statement was attested by Nkgadima (2022) when conducting a study. The findings indicate that learners committed a mistake of using a hyphen when they omitted a hyphen between two words that belong together. Secondly, when students committed an error in hyphen usage by producing unhyphenated forms, and lastly, they misused a hyphen to connect two words that do not belong together. This can confirm that indeed learners are struggling with the use of hyphen.

2.4.3.6. Quotation mark

Quotation marks are used to outline direct speech and quotations (Johnson, 2017). Some learners have difficulties on using quotation mark. Others do not know where and how to apply such kind of punctuation when writing. According to Newsletter article (Wilson, 2019), it is important for learners to be familiar with parts of speech as

it helps them to understand sentences and how they are supposed to construct those sentences properly. This simply indicate that learners are failing to use quotation mark because they are not aware with sentence construction. Nkgadima (2022) mentions that during his study, the findings indicate that majority of learners apply open quote without closing quotes in a sentence. This leads to learners failing to demonstrate that a sentence was quoted from another source.

2.5. Grammatical errors

Richards (2020) claims that grammatical errors refer to divisive usage, case of faulty and incorrect use of verb tense. Onwuegbuzie & Corrigan (2018) cited by Nkgadima (2022) defines grammatical errors as, “Instances of unbecoming, unconventional, or controversial usage, such as a subject-verb disagreement or an inapplicability of a verb tense”. In short, a grammatical error defines faulty forms in semantic meanings and use committed during writing. Krishnasamy (2015) cited by Nkgadima (2022) claims that, “Grammatical errors in writing are caused by several factors such as language transfer, inadequate grammar knowledge and ignorance of learners on the grammar rules”. Some of the grammatical errors are as follows:

2.5.1. Tenses

Fabricius (2019) defines tense as a category that indicates reference of time. To support this view, Oxford Learner’s Dictionary (2019) defines ‘tense’ as forms of a verb that may be useful to indicate the time of the action by the verb. It is important for writers to be aware of various tenses to know how to apply them when writing so that the reader can be able to interpret the message correctly. Tenses are backbone and important element of language. For learners to make a simple sentence for their communication, they need tenses. In most languages we find tenses such as; the past, present, and future. In other languages there are two distinct tenses, such as future and present tense. Most of Chinese language are tense less. In African languages we use tenses during writing and speaking, and they are very important and help us to convey the meaning clearly. If a person writes or speaks without tense, everything seems to be analogical, because in all sentences, tenses are used. According to Dang (2010), the essential of tenses can be seen from how often they are used, and that can be observed as tenses appear in the learner`s writing,

speaking, and reading tasks. Manokaran, Ramalingan and Adriana (2013) state that tenses are the parts of grammar because they show time for situation to proceeds. When using tense correctly, communication is clear as there is a good division of time, and it also refrains from misunderstanding in communication.

2.5.1.1 COMMON ERRORS IN SOME TENSES

2.5.1.1.1. Error in using present perfect tense

Learners do not understand tenses and they end up mixing them. Present perfect tense is one of the tenses that learners are facing a challenge on. According to Taherdoost (2022), describing actions that have been done in the recent past and have a connection to the present we use present perfect tense, for instant; “I have eaten meat”. This statement is in present perfect tense as it illustrates a completed action that has a relationship to the present. In addition, Romain, Ez-zizi, Milin, and Divjak, (2022) define present perfect tense as a tense that expresses an event completed in the past and have some relationship with the present. Past and present tense are related to Present perfect tense. conducted a study Alnujiadi and Assalahi, (2023) which was about “Student’ difficulties in Learning Present Perfect Tense”. The study was conducted with Akutansi of SMK Puspita Bangsa Ciputat who was doing Third Year. The objective of this study was to find out about student’s challenges in learning present perfect tense. The findings show that learners are confused when using present perfect tense. Findings show that 8% errors are from regular verb and 21% are from irregular verb. The highest percentage of student’s error in present perfect tense is 53.63%. The errors in differentiating the usage of present perfect and simple past tense are 63.33%.

The findings from that study show that differentiating in the usage of present perfect tense and simple past tense has a higher challenge. Sholenah & Supeno (2022) claims that when she was conducting a study, which was about “some difficulties faced by the students in learning the present perfect tense”, the objective of the research was to find out some several difficulties experienced by the students in learning the present perfect tense. The findings indicate that majority of learners are still confused in the form and usage of present perfect tense. The students still had difficulty in understanding present perfect tense. Okuyama (2020) mentioned that English novice

Japanese learners find it difficult to use present perfect tense. Bazanova, Sokolova and Sysoeva, (2023) point that most ESL authors in science are facing a challenge on when to use present tense and past tense, and they do not have knowledge, whether present and past tense can be used together in the same sentence or paragraph.

2.5.1.1.2. Error in using present continuous tense

Present continuous tense assists in describing actions that are in progress or currently taking place (Nkgadima, 2022). Suwardi (2010) conducted a study about “Students difficulties in learning present continuous tense”. The objective of the study was to find out about the students’ difficulties in learning present continuous tense. The findings indicate that learners mostly made errors when using present continuous tense, about 60% students made error in the usage of present continuous tense. Sukasame, Kantho and Narrot (2014) states that students have a serious challenge when they are required to rearrange a sentence. Furthermore, the findings show that the most errors were in the present continuous tense.

2.5.1.1.3. Shifting verb tense

Richard (2019) postulates that shifting verb tense is when tense changes from one verb to the other within a sentence, such as when a verb changes from past to present tense. Learners make shifting verb tense errors. For Example, this can be when learners use past tense in one sentence, but use present tense in the following sentence. Some learners write a present tense verb when they start their creative essays as a way of introducing an explanation of a concept. Thereafter, they switch to past tense verbs when explaining something that occurred in the past. According to Lee (2011), verb tense is essential in writing because through verb tense, readers can be given proper order and sequence of events of a text.

2.5.1.1.4. Past perfect tense

Ryan (2023) defines past perfect tense as a verb used to refer to a past action which has taken place before another past action. This tense is also called pluperfect. In other words, past present tense used to describe what happened in the past. Learners are facing challenge of using past perfect tense. This is because this tense is

categorized as one of the complex tenses. According to Emma (2023), when conducting a study about challenges faced by learners when using tenses, it indicates that a lot of learners have a challenge of using past perfect tense. This is simply because learners have difficulties in understanding and to use complex tenses. The findings of Emma`s study is more the same with Javed, Juan and Nazli (2013) in which majority of learners performed better in some of the tenses, except 'past perfect tense'. The researcher believes that learners really need help with past tense. Past perfect tense is one of the tenses which have the “perfect” feature, and it causes challenge among learners (Richard, 2019). In order for learners to overcome the problem of past perfect tense, they need to master it perfectly.

2.5.2. **Subject-verb agreement**

According to Matt (2022), subject verb agreement is the grammatical rule that the verb matches the number, person and gender of the subject in a sentence. When learners want to transmit their message effectively to the receiver when writing, they must use subject-verb agreement correctly. In other words, they need to employ correct grammatical rules and choices of words. However, learners have difficulties in constructing correct sentences with subject verb agreement. This is caused by inadequate information they have with subject verb agreement rules. To support this view, Walla, (2024) argues that learners commit subject verb agreement error because they have challenge in their mother tongue or the first acquired language. Furthermore, the reason why learners experience challenge in writing is because there are no rules regarding subject-verb agreement, is the reason why most of the learners’ experience challenges in their writing. According to Radin and Fong (2014) students from Malaysian have problem with four types of subject-verb agreement such as verb agreement of person, agreement of verb, agreement of subject and the subject verb agreement of number. Hernandez (2024 alludes to that subject-verb agreement is a basic property of language, while Nndwamato (2017) also believes that a person doesn’t know the language unless he or she understands the rules of subject-verb agreement and can apply them in context.

This problem of subject-verb agreement which is experienced around the world (Nndwamato, 2017). To gain insight of what has been found about subject-verb

agreement the researcher reviewed some the research studies from Europe, Asia and Africa. Several studies from the above countries were conducted about subject-verb agreement amongst second language learners. Some of them are analyzed and discussed in this section. Maliwa (2009) conducted a study with Grade 10 and Grade 12 learners learning isXhosa as a home language. The researcher found that subject verb agreement error is the problem to both grades. Both groups committed concord errors because they had not fully mastered the subject-verb rules. Similarly, Nzama (2010) conducted a study among iSizulu Grade 10 and 12 learners. In both grades learners were failing to use subject-verb agreement correctly. Majority of learners were not conversant with the fact that the verb should always agree with the subject. For example, plural subject is followed by plural verb form, and the singular subject is followed by the singular verb form. The researcher observed that almost all participants in this study committed this error. Nzama`s findings reveal that all learners from both grades have not yet grasped how to work with subject-verb agreement. Namibian Polytechnic learners were committing subject-verb agreement error and was the most common error compared to other errors, this was revealed by Krishmurty, Kangira, Tjiramanga and Bronwen (2011) when conducting research about concord error. Learners were not applying the third person-s rule in affirmative, including negative sentences and cases where an -s was added if the subject was plural.

Furthermore, the study about subject-verb agreement error was conducted by Klu (2014) with Ghana Technology University College students. The research findings revealed that students. We're not conversant with the rules which govern the use of concord within tenses. The researcher provides some examples from data collected from participants` scripts. The findings are as follows:

Incorrect usage of subject-verb agreement	**Correct usage of subject-verb agreement**
The traffic officer left the scene of the accident after they took statement of the incident,	The traffic officer left the scene of the accident after they had

	taken statement of the incident. Or After the traffic officer had taken the statement of the incident, they left the scene.
Communication help the human being to spread massage	Communication helps the human being to spread massage

The two sentences make it obvious that when it comes to the use of concord within tenses, and the subject-verb agreement, students from Ghana college are not conversant with the rules. These rules instruct that whenever one wants to describe two events which happened in the past, the correct tense to use is the past perfect and that the singular subject agrees with a singular verb as it is the case in the correct section from the table above. The massage could still be delivered, but there is poor sentence construction which is not what could have been expected at this level of language learning.

Mbau (2014) points out that, when they were conducting their study, they found that majority of Indonesian students experience difficulties to learn English because of huge differences between English and their Home Language in morphology, syntax and semantics. They posit that some errors in subject verb agreement happened because of second language acquisition. But, according to Zheng (2020) subject-verb error may happen even if there is no problem with the background of the first language. In the study the researcher also revealed that learners from Korean and Chinese commit mistakes of subject-verb agreement due to the process of second language acquisition.

2.5.3. Pronoun Disagreement

According to Caulfied (2020), pronoun disagreement refers to the usage of pronoun in a sentence which does not match in terms of number or gender. The problem of pronoun usage in academic writing constitutes a huge challenge in learners' writing. These errors are widespread and stem from several important factors, one of the factors is that major issues are linked with the pronoun-antecedent agreement usage (Severino & Cogie, 2016). Pronoun-antecedent agreement is the biggest issue in learners' writing as they use it incorrectly. Authors further state that, in a grammatical rule, a pronoun must be aligned with the antecedent, or the noun it replaces in terms of number, gender, and person. This means that when learners use pronouns, they must make sure that there is an agreement with the noun they are representing. This means that the number, the gender, and the person of the pronoun must be the same as the noun. On the other hand, learners often encounter difficulties in using pronouns that refer to collective nouns (Jegede & Akinola, 2021). The use of gender-neutral pronouns is another challenge causing pronoun disagreement. According to Latupeirissa and Sayd (2019), to overcome this problem , learners must consider transition between formal and informal writing or speaking styles. Learners frequently use pronouns in casual discussions without carefully following the principles and rules of pronoun-antecedent agreement. However, in professional or academic writing, it is crucial to strictly follow these rules. Therefore, anyone who wants to communicate effectively in language must learn and comprehend these rules thoroughly.

Kamlasi and Nokas (2020) point out that non-native English speakers might find it challenging to use pronouns correctly because of the influence of their native language. Some languages do not differentiate between the pronouns "he" and "she," while others do not have pronoun "it". Therefore, when these speakers try to use English pronouns, they may become perplexed and make mistakes. However, the correct use of pronouns can be difficult due to the shift between academic writing and spoken English. Academic writing's tone is frequently more formal and impersonal, which restricts the use of pronouns such as "I," we," and "you." This depersonalization represents a significant difference from colloquial English where these pronouns are regularly utilized. Because of this, Al-Adawi (2019) argues that learners are failing to strike the proper balance between preserving an academic tone and ensuring the

coherence of their argument. To overcome this challenge, learners need to understand how to use pronoun-antecedent correctly. Teachers as well should play a role through providing specialized instruction to aid learners in developing their skills about pronoun usage Nordquist (2024). Additionally, learners must engage in deliberate practice and revision of their work to improve their grasp of pronoun usage. In Pakistan, various studies have emphasized the issue of incorrect usage of pronouns among higher education students in their academic writing (Li & Akram, 2024). However, this problem is prevalent across all levels of education and it is not limited to any particular level (Li & Akram, 2024). Additionally, Fareed et al., (2016) conducted a study about pronoun usage challenge at the college level and the findings revealed that students experience challenges in using pronouns correctly in their academic writing. One significant issue highlighted in the study was the difficulty students face in selecting the appropriate pronoun that matches the respective antecedent.

2.5.4. Faulty Parallelism

According to Nordquist (2024), faulty parallelism is a construction in which two or more parts of a sentence are equal in meaning, but not grammatically similar in form. He further states that faulty parallelism is also known as uneven parallel structure. To support this view, Wiliams and White (2022) assert that faulty parallelism is a lack of consistency in the grammatical structure within a list, which can result into confusion and impact the clarity of the sentence construction. In writing, to produce well-structured and understandable sentences, learners must have knowledge of faulty parallelism (Ayuningsih, Ali & Malabar, 2020). However, majority of learners do not understand the concept of parallelism and they fail to apply it in writing, which leads to faulty parallelism. There are different factors in language which can cause learners to commit faulty parallelism when writing.

According to Nkereuwem, Adoromike, and Ozo, (2023), factors causing faulty parallelism is lack of knowledge, lack of attention and poor vocabulary. According to these authors, lack of knowledge in issues related to parallelism is the main factor. This is supported by Salem (2021) when he argues that participants commit faulty parallelism when writing because they lack knowledge about parallel structure since they do not learn about it specifically in class. Furthermore, the author points out that,

learners probably know the general rules and principles of parallelism, but majority of them do not have any idea on how to apply those rules and principles in writing because of knowledge deficiency. Another factor that contributes to faulty parallelism is that learners pay less attention to faulty parallelism when writing. According to Sun et al. (2021), when learners are writing, they tend to ignore the details related to grammar and structure of the sentence, particularly parallel structure. This occurs because they put more focus on ideas that will deliver and focus on the content that they are writing. The above statement is supported by Zengin and Vafeiadis (2013), when they point out that gun when learners write their work they only focus on the ideas and contents of the writing rather than the parallel structure of the grammar.

2.5.5. Conjunction

Conjunction is a word which is used to join words, phrases and clauses (Pangaribuan, Haddina and Manik, 2018). There are various conjunctions in language which can be used to join two sentences. Most learners fail to use conjunctions when joining sentences or phrases, and this makes them write mis-understandable essays. Abubakari, (2023) found that most grammatical errors are caused by learners' inability to use conjunctions. Pangaribuan, Haddina & Manik (2018) argue that conjuncttions are very important for the learners to develop their writing skills, especially in grammar as they can understand how to join words or phrases. According to Pangaribuan, Haddina & Manik (2018), the importance of conjunction is to build grammar skill to learners, because conjunction is more essential as it is part of language.

Farneste (2018) points out that grammatical errors can be caused by misusing conjunctions in sentences. Martínez (2019) conducted a study about how conjunctions have been used by Spanish English EFL learners when writing argumentative essays. Findings reveal that some students cannot use conjunctions to show the last item in a list. Rather, they use conjunctions at the end of the sentences–which causes grammatical errors in their writings. Apse conjunction errors correlate written work quality. According to Warriner (1982) cited by Fansuri (2021), there are different types of conjunctions like coordinating, correlative, subordinating, and conjunctive adverb.

2.5.5.1. Coordinating conjunction

According to Traffis (2020), coordinating conjunction is a word used to combine two or more elements of the same grammatical rank and syntactic importance. When words, phrases, and clauses that are equal are connected, we use coordinating conjunction. In Tshivenda Home Language there are also coordinating conjunctions, but learners are unable to use them correctly, which results in grammatical error in their writing. According to Unubi (2016), coordinating links sentence elements of equal grammatical forms e.g., adverbs with adverbs, nouns with nouns, phrases with phrases and clauses with clauses. Also, coordinating conjunction can connect two sentences that do not depend on each other for meaning. Tetzner (2021) states that usual way to link independent clauses into compound sentences is through coordinating conjunction. According to Fansuri (2021), coordinating conjunction can be used when we write and speak language, the authors further states that,there are different types of coordinating conjunction such as: coordinating conjunction (cumulative as an example), correlative conjunction, subordinating conjunction, and conjunctive verb. Cumulative coordinating conjunction as the first conjunction to be outlined here is one of the types of coordinating conjunction, which is useful in adding phrases, statements and words to another (Nkgadima, 2022).

Cumulative conjunctions are and both, as well as no less, than, not only, etc. Second one is alternative coordinating Conjunction-This type of coordinating conjunction is useful when we want to link ideas or objects that are alternative. We can even use alternative coordinating conjunction if we want to list various ways so that we can select between them. Adversative ccoordinating cconjunction is the third one. This type of conjunction is used when we want to oppose statements, even when we want to denote contrasting. Adversative coordinating conjunction includes but, yet, still, however, only etc. Chen (2006) conducted a study with Taiwan students studying masters. The findings designate that English First Language writers mostly use additive conjunctions, but writers who are professional mostly use conjunctive adverbials in the category of adversative. Furthermore, in this study, the findings show that conjunctions were inappropriately used by learners, such as besides and, therefore. In this study, one of the conclusions is that learners more often use conjunctions (therefore) to cord sentences together without establishing any logic. Even though these conjunctions are found in Tshivenda Home Language, learners are unable to use them and these create grammatical errors. Lastly, there is illative

coordinating conjunction and examples are: for, so, therefore, then. This is useful in joining two phrases where the first phrase refers to the second phrase.

2.5.5.2. Correlative conjunction

Unibi (2016) defines correlative conjunctions as a pair of words that match two same essential clauses or phrases in one complete thought. Correlative conjunctions are useful in outlining emphasis to the combination of two structures that are equal through linking words that consist of two parts (Sahebkeir & Aidinlou, 2014) cited by (Unubi, 2016). These kinds of conjunctions are classified as term conjunctions, and this is simple because they are used in pairs. The reason why they are called (correlative) is because they work together and are able to relate one sentence with an element of another. There are similarities between correlative and coordinating conjunctions because both are in a sentence fragment. Lester (1990) cited by Unubi (2019) points out correlative and coordinating conjunctions, except that they work similarly. They both include neither, either, but also, such, as many, not only, whether, no sooner, etc. Mehmet and Ender (2015) conducted a study about correlative conjunctions and claims that when a person is using correlative conjunctions, that person must ensure that verbs agree with elements of the sentences, so that it can make sense. Using correlative conjunctions incorrectly can cause sudden confusion in writing, and learners can sound as non-native in their speech.

2.5.5.3. Subordinating conjunction

Unubi (2019) defines subordinating conjunctions as words which are used to connect main clauses in a complex sentence with subordinate clauses. Subordinating conjunction is useful in connecting unequal rank of clauses. This means that subordinating conjunctions are useful in connecting independent and dependent clauses that depend on the main clause for relevance and meaning. In other words, subordinate clauses cannot stand alone while main clauses can stand alone without depending on subordinate clauses. That is why it is called subordinator, because it uses subordinators to link two clauses as in a single unit. According to Nelson & Greenbaum (2018), subordination is between two clauses in such a way that one is part of the other. In simple words, we can say it is non-symmetrical. According to Sahebkeir and Aidinlou (2014), another way of calling subordinating conjunctions is

transitional conjunctions. Subordinators are single words, and they include: when, where, after, because, if, that, unless, while then, whether, in order that, though, although, till, before, nevertheless, etc. Subordinating conjunctions are essential in creating complex sentences which are necessary in expressing different thoughts and ideas in a cohesive manner (Johnson, 2017). It is therefore necessary for teachers to come up with various engaging activities that learners can undertake to learn and master the use of subordinating conjunctions. Hidayah, Bochari and Jamiluddin, (2024) claim that learners can develop writing skill when they are able to use subordinating conjunctions.

2.5.5.4. Conjunctive adverbs

According to John (2022), conjunctive adverbs are words that link two independent clauses or sentences by showing the relationship between them. Furthermore, Zhang, (2021) defines conjunctive adverb as an adverb or adverbial phrase that indicates a relation in meaning between two sequential independent clauses. Conjunction adverbs are also called transitional adverbs while others call them adverbial conjunctions. When we want to add, compare and indicate contrast relationship among two clauses, we can use conjunctive adverbs. Conjunctive adverbs associates' paragraph to paragraph sentence to sentence. We can use conjunctive adverbs to show a function between two independent clauses in a sentence, to show a function between two separate sentences, or to act as an interrupter word or phrase (Johnson, 2017). Ikhratulsandi, Rofiqoh and Aridm (2021) conducted a study. The findings indicate that eighth grade learners in SMP Nigeria commit errors when using conjunctive adverbs when writing descriptive text. According to their conclusions, 38.88% of errors were from misplacing conjunctive adverbs, 16.66% errors inappropriate conjunctive adverbs, and 94.73% used conjunctive adverbs correctly.

2.6. Causes of learners' inability to learn writing skills effectively

Writing is a skill which learners are expected to learn during Foundation Phase. However, it is surprising that other learners are unable to write in the Senior Phase and sometimes in FET Phase. Although learners are unique, others have some learning barriers. The inability to write at age-appropriate levels cannot be admittedly attributed to learning barriers. Hence, research of this nature is required to examine

other factors that contribute to challenges of writing, particularly those that influence grammatical errors. The researcher believes that learners deem it less important and not compulsory for them to learn Home Language writing skills. According to Chauke (2022), learners become ignorant and read less Home Language written materials to improve their vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and grammar skills, that is why they are facing a challenge in writing.

According to Misbah (2017), poor writing skills among most learners are caused by poor vocabulary. Hence, Zhong, (2018) alludes that one of the foundations in writing effectively is vocabulary because it enables writers to construct meaningful sentences. The researcher believes that when learners are unable to write proper creative essays because of grammatical errors, other challenge which leads to this problem is that they cannot read. According to Pangaribuan, Haddina & Manik (2018), learners cannot read and write as it is impossible to write what one cannot read or pronounce. In other words, these skills work hand in hand. Learners are lazy to read in such a way that it creates a problem in their writing. This implies that there are relationships between the four languages skills, in that one skill cannot exist without the other, e.g., writing cannot exist without reading. Recommendations from the major English or Language Arts professional organizations support that when someone can read information, it means that he or she can also write effectively (Taherdoost, 2022). In the study of Nkgadima (2022), one of the conclusions is that when someone or a child can read excellently, writing becomes positive to them. Foster (2016) supports the above claims when indicating that shortage or lack of exposure to reading materials or books may result in writing problems which can cause learners to drop-out of school. This simply tells us that for learners who are having the issue of writing, they become bored at school or they do not see any purpose to be at school, so they are quiet.

Readiness to learn writing skill is another challenge learners at school are facing during the process of learning writing. Learners' readiness is important for learners to excel in their writings. According to Winars (2016), readiness is very important for a person to successfully complete a task. Foster (2015), when conducting a study indicates that learners need to be prepared to learn to write through motivation and by attracting their attention. For learners to learn writing positively, they need all people around them to give them support through motivation, as it will prepare them to be

ready to learn how to write. According to Foster (2016), one of the issues that are making learners unable to write is that they are not motivated. Furthermore, the author concurs that an educator can motivate learners by giving them rewards or use simple phrases such as well done, keep it up, good try and good job. Motivation is essential in learners' results, as it helps them to improve their performance (Gbollie and Keamu, 2017). A shortage of learning materials at schools is one of the problems experienced by learners. When there is a shortage of materials or resources at school, it means that learning and teaching processes will not be effective. In some schools there is a challenge of teaching and learning materials, whereas the government is trying all the best to provide, but still due to a number of learners at schools, there is a shortage. The researcher believes that if teaching and learning materials become a challenge to be reached by learners and educators, that is where the issues concerning education will strike. According to Foster (2016), the issue faced by learners at elementary school when they want to learn writing is that there is a shortage of book exposure and reading materials. It is difficult for learners to find proper sources of information (Mahammad & Fareed, 2016). For learners to be able to learn writing, they need to know how to read because those skills are interrelated.

2.7. The importance of grammar in writing

Language is embraced of four skills, which are speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. When learners produce language, they apply writing and speaking skills that is why they are referred to as productive skills (Fitria, 2018). To produce meaningful massage or oral responses learners need to be conscious when using grammar. According to Fitria (2018) language learners, need to master punctuation, vocabulary, sentence structure, formatting and spelling so that they can be able to convey their ideas clearly. Grammar is an important component in writing process (Hassan, Nor, Rosly & Zakaria ,2019). According to MacMillan (2017) grammar provides information that assists the reader's comprehension. Furthermore, the researcher states that grammar helps to eliminate grammatical errors from their writing and assist the readers with clear communication. According to Nkgadima (2022) language learners need to produce good writing skills through considering grammar competency. Rana, Owaidh and Harbi (2019) allude that grammar should not be treated the same as the

approaches of language learning. This is because teaching of grammar involves writing as a leading productive skill for learners and function.

Zuhriyah (2017) points out that competency in grammar amongst four language skills (writing, speaking, listening and reading) is to facilitate meaning. Thus, writing error free grammar is a foundation of clear communication. Furthermore, it guides how language should be utilized in writing. In other words, grammar helps to make meaning. Between grammar and writing there is a relationship between securing correctness in writing expressions. In simple words, accurate grammar usage governs writing skill. Developing fluency of grammar in language impact the mastery of writing (Effendi, Rokhyati, Rachman, Rakhmawati, and Pertiwi, 2017). While Wornyo (2016) opines that inadequate language grammar causes poor language proficiency which poses negative effects on the performance of the students in their various disciplines and their academic progress. The insufficient grammar knowledge when writing negatively impact learners` results. To write clearly, is important for learners to demonstrate a comprehension of the basic system of language usage, such as knowledge of punctuation, sentence structure, vocabulary and grammar (Fitria 2018). For learners to eradicate error they should work on their grammatical accuracy in writing.

Although grammar is important, learners are struggling to master grammatical rules. This is supported by Modipane (2011) he argues that the first entering students at the University of Limpopo are struggling to participate in the pedagogical discourse during lectures due to lack of confidence with their English proficiency. The author further argues that the lack of confidence is perpetuated by the students' poor performance at the secondary school level. Furthermore, Modipane concludes that students doing their first year whose English competency falls below the required language proficiency or lacks appropriate language skills are likely to find it difficult to cope with their studies. Moe and Toe (2020) concur that inadequate grammatical knowledge exposes students to challenges ranging from sentence construction or choosing the correct words to express their ideas correctly. The process of writing and grammar are two aspects which cannot be isolated from each other. Grammar prescribes rules for writers to accomplish coherence, clarity, sense and conciseness in meaning

(Sumalinog ,2018). As such, productive skills such as speaking and writing require advanced use of grammar to deliver clear meanings.

2.8. **What is error analysis?**

Error analysis is the study and analysis of the errors done by the learners learning second language (Hasan and Munandar,2018). This is supported by Sobahle (2022) who defines error analysis as the study of errors made by people who share their mother tongue language when learning a second or third language. Error analysis helps learners to engage deeply in their errors and that of others around them, as a way of understanding and opportunities for growth and learning. According to Al-Khresheh (2016) error analysis helps educators to be aware of the goals achieved and what remains to learnt. Furthermore, error analysis also informs educators where to put more emphasis when revising with their learners. Ellis (2015) asserts that there are three main reasons to perform error analysis, firstly, it helps teachers to identify the highest errors committed by learners, secondly to identify the possible reasons why learners make errors and lastly when learners can self-correct the errors they have made, they are able to learn the target language without errors.

2.9. The significance of error analysis.

Manmoud and Zoubi (2018) assert that, error analysis of learners` writings, help them to move forward to having acceptable writing skills in language. According to those researchers making errors can assist in developing language competence and as an assisting factor in second language learning. kelechi,Nzerem, and Bob (2021) point that error made by learners are significant in three various forms; for teachers as a sign of learning process, for learners to overcome these errors in their writing and for teachers as they demonstrate how learners learn the language and the strategies they adopted to learn the language. According to Bialystok (2024) error provides indication as to the language processes and gives a picture of linguistic development. According Chauke (2022) error analysis is not only beneficial to teachers and learners but also to language specialists. Although errors hinder communication, it can also facilitate language learning. Emvula (2020) concurs that error analysis is not useful to teachers only, but syllabus makers or textbook writers through demonstrating to them a learner` progress. n language and demonstrate the type of error learners make and why.

Chauke (2022) states that, when a learner has an error, the most efficient way to teach them the correct forms is by letting them discover the error and use different hypotheses themselves. Therefore, learners should find linguistic forms by themselves (Bialystok, 2024.).

2.10. MISTAKES AND ERRORS

Gayo and Widodo (2018) allude to that, mistakes are something that a writer can be able to self-correct either made unintentional or intentional. In other words, a person can recognize the mistake he/she has done and manage to correct. In grade 7 learners from the selected school, mistakes and errors were noticed. Errors and mistakes indicate that something has been completed wrongly. Mostly, people think that mistakes and errors are the same, whereas they are externally different. According to Al-Sobhi (2019), Mistakes occur due to some reasons. It can happen because of a learner`s slip of tongue while speaking or of pen during writing. Furthermore, the author states that it can also happen because the learner is stressed, anxious and nervous. When learners fail to use known grammar correctly, it can be due to mispronunciation or when a pen slips and it leads to spelling errors during writing. Therefore, we call this a mistake. It is easier for native speakers to quickly correct themselves.

According to Nhut (2020), “errors are the way of deviations that shows learners’ level of competency”. Nkgadima (2022) claims that “Errors are language forms that deviate from language rules which are expected from educated native speakers”. Learners can commit errors when writing or speaking due to a lack of knowledge of correct language rules to be used. Learners who commit errors can repeat without noticing that there is something wrong, as they do not have knowledge. Lack of knowledge in language can cause students to commit errors and hinder them from performing well (Sobhi, 2019). Goldsmith and Sujaritjan (2020) point out those learners committing mistakes can notice and correct such mistakes, whereas when they commit errors, and they are not familiar with the errors they have committed. Learners are unable to self-correct those errors without guidance of someone who can notice the error.

2.11. TAXONOMY OF ERRORS IN WRITTING

According to Shahriari & Shadloo (2019), errors are classified due to their processes, and how learners commit errors, it is also caused by categorization of processes. Dullay, Burt and Krashen (1982) cited by Hikmah (2020) states that omission, addition, substitution, and permutation are four kinds of errors. In a position where errors occur during writing, it is explained by these four types of errors. Hayati (2019) points out that incomplete application of the target language rules is a result of errors. Below are basic types of grammatical errors and their explanation:

2.11.1. Omission

When learners write they commit errors by leaving out some of the items that are necessary for a sentence to be grammatically correct. Omission is the absence of important items within a sentence (Corder and Kusumawardhani, 2017). Gayo and Widodo (2018) allude that editing of the English language items from a sentence is a type of error called omission. Dulay at el (1982) cited by Setyaningrum and Fatmawaty (2020) claim that preposition, nouns, verbs, and articles as an example of morphemes are mostly omitted by learners when they write their creative essay. When punctuation, verb, articles, spellings or conjunctions are omitted by learners when they write, it leads to omission. Confusion is a result of omitting morphemes. Hayati (2019) points out that learners commit omission errors during collection of addition usage. For example, “I am study my books now, instead of “I am studying my books now”. Here, the inflection –ing must be added to the main verb study to indicate the present continuous tense. Other example of sentences that are omitted:

I also a chritian. (I am also a Christian)

She so angry. (she was so angry)

You from poor family. (You are from poor family)

Gayo and Widodo (2018) found that learners make errors mostly in the level of morphology e.g., omission of preposition to and in, omission of personal pronoun it, derivation omission of inflection –ing and –er, omission of article, copula be.

2.11.2. Addition

Addition is vice-versa of omission. According to Mitari, Anguru, and Uwamariya, (2024) addition is the presence of an unnecessary item within a sentence. When learners write, sometimes they include some words that are not necessary, and it is called addition. In support of Hikmah **(**2020), addition is defined as an error that is committed when learners include unnecessary or unwanted word or phrase in their writings. According to Dulay, Burt et al., (1982) cited by Setyaningrum and Fatmawaty (2020), addition is a type of preposition errors that are classified by unwanted items that are unnecessary in a grammatical utterance. Gayo and Widodo (2018: 66) found that morphology level is one of the addition errors that occur:

Some of them can jump to 30 **feets** in the air.

Cockroach is **a insect.**

Another example: They are always playing netball at 10 a.m. instead of They always play netball at 10 a.m. If you look at the sentence above, you can see that auxiliary verb “are” is unnecessary because play is the main verb in a sentence above, and the sentence is in the present simple tense.

2.11.3. Substitution/ Mis- formation

According to Keshavarz (2013) cited by Nkgadima (2022), the use of incorrect form of word in a sentence or an utterance is substitution or mis-formation. Hikmah **(**2020) states that wrong form of the language structure is substitution. When learners commit substitution or mis-formation is when they inappropriately use certain form in writing. According to Setyaningrum and Fatmawaty (2020), substitution is presented in the following sentences:

In the sixth grade, I have to go to a study tour. (**At** the sixth grade, I have to go to

A study tour)

My first job is difficult to me. (My first job is difficult **for** me)

Another Example: Donkey is different to Zebra instead of Donkey is different from Zebra. Here, the correct preposition for the adjective is different from.

2.11.4. Permutation/ Mis- Ordering

Hikmah (2020) stresses that mis-ordering refers to the process of putting things in a wrong or incorrect order. Mufidah and Islam (2022) found that when morpheme is placed in a wrong way in an utterance or a group of morphemes in an utterance, it is a result of mis-ordering or permutation. Furthermore, they point out that when there are differences between L1 and L2 construction, it leads to Permutation or mis-ordering errors. Keshavarz (2013) as cited by Setiyorini, Dewi and Masykuri (2020) states that placement of a morpheme or a word in a sentence or an utterance which is not organized correctly is permutation. For example, “Do not be a son lazy!” The sentence above shows that there is a wrong placement of a free morpheme. The correct way to write this sentence should be, “Do not be a lazy son!”

2.12. LANGUAGE TRANSFER

When writers or speakers apply knowledge from one language to another language is language transfer (Nndwamato, 2017). Supporting this, Kifli & Nasution (2023) posit that transfer of language happens when learners are learning a new language; they apply the rules of their home language to their second language. As a result, they find that those languages do apply, but sometimes those rules do not apply, which then result in language errors. Amin (2017) states that language transfer occurs when learners try to communicate in the target language. This takes place because of factors in linguistics such as inadequate knowledge of language, as it opens up utilization of language in various levels. Learners have the tendency of translating target language towards their indigenous language at the sentence and paragraph levels to understand text (Amiri & Puteh, 2017). As alluded by Chai (2022) and Wang (2021), transfer of language is the result of differences and sameness of impact of language, which can cause consequences in the several language levels. For instance, phonology, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and others. Brogan and Son (2015) stress that when learners are learning L2 in the early phase, while writing and speaking in the L2 and their L1 is topologically related to the target language. Therefore, they have a tendency of relying on structural entities of their first language. Malaki (2020) attests that transfer of language determines if learners can mostly return to the structural patterns and parameters of their L1 during L2 production.

2.12.1. Level of Language Transfer

Language transfer is either positive or negative when learners are learning second language. This can be determined by the gap between home language and second language (VanPatten & Williams, 2015). When learners can do language transfer, it can lead to facilitation of the L2 learning. Khosroshahi (2019) points out that there are opposing roles of language transfer: a facilitating role of L1 that enables a student to utilize L1 features in L2 production as an outcome from positive transfer and negative transfer as a product from the absence of such an equivalent correspondence.

2.12.2. Positive transfer

According to Bai and Cailing (2017), positive transfer allows learners to facilitate language learning in another circumstance. Chai (2022) concurs that positive language transfer results in facilitation of successful language learning. When learners are learning second language, grammar rules in L1 can have an influence towards second language. This simply means that mother tongue language can also play a vital role on Second language. Second language learning is a determining factor which is facilitated by the topological proximity between L1 and L2. Yule (2010) points out that L2 learners can benefit from the positive transfer of L1 grammatical knowledge to the L2 only if home language and second language have the same features. Positive language transfer improves learners` progress, more especially when there is alignment of grammar between L1 and target language. Houssos (2020) stress that learners learn the second language easier when there are similarities between the L1 and target language in vocabulary, phonetics and syntax. Existence of similarities of features between L1 and L2 bring positive outcome for second language learners to learn the L2. Hummel (2020) and Master (2021) observe that learners are more likely to master the English articles than those whose indigenous language do not carry identical articles. Saville-Troike (2020) claims that when a similar structure is applicable in both languages, it means that positive transfer has taken place.

2.12.3. Negative transfer

Cailing (2017) cited by Nkgadima (2022) defines negative transfer as the interfering of an outcome from the native language in second language. Chai (2022) points out that negative transfer results in L1 items being transferred incorrectly when learning L2. Improper transfer of the indigenous language rules is a result of negative language

transfer which can cause harmful influence on the command of the rules of the L2. Hamdi (2017) discovered that for the message to be misunderstood, it is caused by inappropriate lexical choices that change communication. Error occurrences and incorrect forms or structure cause negative language transfer, because it is the outcome from the L1 interference. Bhela (2019) also points out that when two languages are different in language structure, it means that one language will experience more errors. Nel and Swanepoel (2010) found that there is a confusion of non-native English language students when pronouncing non-existence of the corresponding words in Tshivenda and most South African indigenous languages to demonstrate gender identification. Due to this confusion and failure of learners to use corresponding grammatical gender, it may cause misunderstanding from the readers. As there is no pronoun that is the same in L1 to be used in English pronoun, this causes gender confusion. Gender marked language is English. He (masculine) describes male whereas she (feminine) describes female on grammatical gender system. On native language such as Tshivenda, there is no such distinction like the way that English language does. According to Nndwamato (2017), English Language impartial of gender describes either female or male. For example, in English they can say:

He or She writes a book

O nwala bugu

According to Yule (2010), in the earlier stage of L2 learning, it is where negative transfer is more popular as learners grow L2 fluency. Lei (2024) stresses that negative transfer determines when indigenous language habits are carried into L2, which makes misunderstanding in the outcomes. Chai (2020) found that negative transfer on learners learning English is a result of cultural differences, vocabulary, grammar, syntax and thinking mode. In the second language acquisition, negative transfer is a huge challenge, which is causing difficulties and mistakes in the learning process (Lin & Wen, 2013). Ahamed and Othman (2019) discovered that when learners write their essays, they commit lexical errors because of negative transfer and poor vocabulary knowledge. Instead of teachers teaching when to use grammatical construction, they focus on how to form a particular function.

2.13. CAUSES OF LANGUAGE ERRORS

Language Errors committed by learners at school are caused by various things. Moe and Toe (2020) point out that one of the causes of errors committed by learners is the shortage of learning materials and under qualified language educators. Nel and Swanepoel (2010) when conducting a study, they found that teachers who do not know which tenses to use in various context are the ones that are not adequately qualified in English as a language subject. Other causes of language errors are as follows:

2.13.1. Lack of knowledge about rules

Moe and Toe (2020) point out that lack of knowledge about language rules have an influence on learners` language errors. When Tshivenḓa Home Language learners have insufficient knowledge about Tshivenda language rules, this can lead to errors and mistakes, and language learning is impeded. Due to lack of knowledge about the language rules, learners think they can use simple rules to communicate effectively. Some learners are only ignorant when it comes to language rules. Rana, Owaidh and Harbi (2019) argue that when learners flout language rules of the existing structure and use those rules to the contexts where they are not applicable, it is ignorance of rule restrictions.

2.13.2. Simplification

According to Moe and Toe (2020), simplification is an error which takes place when learners minimize grammar aspects that are complex and use a set of rules that are simple. Learners use simple language structure, rather than complex structure because they are not well knowledgeable when it comes to language rules. According to Brown (2019), simplification is caused as an outcome of failure to use language rules and restrictions.

2.13.3. Over-generalization

Over-generalization is also called overdoing the concept. Nordquist (2010) states that over-generalization is when grammatical rules are applied where they do not fit. According to Nordquist (2010), over-generalization helps in learning language, and learners extend irregular words from regular grammatical patterns. Learners use indirect and direct questions patterned the same, whereas they are not the same and

cannot be generalized. Another example of over-generalization is adding a plural marker such as -s /-es on a noun with plural formation such as tooth- toothes/tooths instead of tooth- teeth. Al-Badawi (2018) conducted a study about errors in English essays of some Saudi Arabian learners in grade 10. The study focused on analyzing phonetic, morphology and syntactic errors. The study revealed that most committed errors were over-generalisation and lack of adequate knowledge in L2.

2.13.4. Fossilization

According to Saville-Troike (2020), fossilization is a stable state in second language acquisition, where learners cease their inter-language development before they reach target norms, despite continuing L2 input and passage of time. Gao (2020) defines fossilization as two close notions where one is preserving of ancient linguistic features which have lost their grammatical functions in language and another one lost its productivity of a grammatical paradigm. Fossilized errors can be stigmatized because mostly they show errors which are common at basic level of learners, whereas they are not likely to affect comprehension. Graham (2018) suggests that one of the major causes for fossilization of incorrect language forms is the lack of formal instruction in language.

2.14. Reading as a cause of grammatical errors

Writing good sentences and paragraphs is motivated by learners' good extensive reading. Shortage of reading materials affects learners because they will experience shortage of vocabulary or ideas when they write. Moses and Mohamad (2019) claim that when learners read more often, their brain neurons will be able to work effectively and they can produce wonderful writings, as they will be able to use their prior information. Foster (2015) claims that learners reading different books are familiar with language awareness. Reading and writing skill work hands-in-hands, because learners struggling with reading, they mostly suffer with writing skill as well. According to Moresebetoa (2016), learners that have reading inabilities also have inabilities in writing. Grammatical errors committed by learners have to do with poor reading, meaning that inabilities to read contribute a lot on writing challenge. Reading and writing tasks are the first step to be conceded as the way of discovering what learners

can or cannot do, so that teachers are aware of how to help them in the future (Mengduo & Xiaoling, 2021).

2.15. The importance of teaching grammar in Tshivenda HL classes

Nndwamato (2017) stress that the biggest reason why learners are learning language at school is because of grammar. To build good language among learners, grammatical rules need to be learned. Good grammar can build better communication skill for speakers and writers. Mart (2018) points out that for a learner to be able to construct good sentences when speaking or writing, which can promote effective communication and making clear sentences, it can be possible if a learner is familiar with grammar. Grammar is important because without knowing grammar, it means that you do not know rules about a certain language. That is why it is important to be taught at school. According to Sadat (2017), educators teaching language should be aware of what, how, when and why teaching grammar is important. He further argues that educators teaching ESL should think about the level of the learners. For instance, when they select teaching strategy because teaching grammar is more dependent on learners 'understanding. National Senior Certificate Diagnostic Analysis (2014), the Department of Basic Education (DBE) suggested that for language subjects' performance to improve, learners must be taught grammar and assessed a lot in grammar basic skills.

2.16. How do grammatical errors affect learners' writing skills?

Grammatical errors can affect learners' writing skills in such a way that they will not be able to communicate their thoughts clearly through writing. Writing is a way of communicating with others. However, when there are grammatical errors in a text, communication between an educator and learners will not be effective. According to Kizi, (2024), learners who experience poor communication skills also face a challenge of expressing their points of view through writing. Furthermore, Kizi, (2024) argue that when learners experience challenges in speaking, such challenges can affect their written language skills development. Poor readability or clarity is one of the impacts caused by grammatical errors in learners' creative essays. When learners` creative essays have a lot of grammatical errors, educators will have challenges of reading their written works. Equally, when words are misspelled, or sentences are missing

punctuation, readers can be easily distracted when reading the text to an extent that, even when the story is good, the reader can lose interest. Mary (2021) argues that most learners have no interest in writing because of the challenges they experience, such as lack of writing skill when they write. Graham (2019) reveals that writing barriers faced by learners include bad handwriting and spelling errors that lead to poor readability of learners' writings. The researcher believes that poor writing skill is the result of poor handwriting. As such, that is why learners become discouraged when they fail to present proper work. When learners write their creative essays, it is important to gain credibility or acceptability from readers (educators). To gain credibility from the readers (educator) in creative essay writing, learners must follow proper grammar rules. Thus, when learners write and get poor credibility from the readers, they lose confidence, self-esteem, and interest in writing.

2.17. Challenges faced by teachers in teaching writing skills

Teachers are experiencing several challenges during the process of teaching learners writing skills. Afri (2022) points out that one of the challenges is that when teachers teach learners in the classroom, they come across learners with different cognitive levels in the same classroom, and as such, the teaching process is becoming a challenge. According to Zhong, (2018), when learners' levels vary, it is difficult for the teacher to cater to those learners according to their levels. Zhong, (2018) further state that, when there is a variety of learners' cognitive levels of writing ability in the same classroom, it requires the teacher to teach using variety of teaching approaches, and that is where the challenges start. It is difficult for teachers to prepare their lessons with different teaching approaches for those learners. Some learners are facing a challenge of parental indifference and both teachers and learners are suffering due to this issue. It is difficult to teach learners that they lack parental support and motivation. Some learners go through depression and face low-self esteem caused by parental indifference, and it makes educators` work difficult, because there is no way that a learner with this problem can learn positively in a classroom. Learners without affection and warmth from their parents suffer in their learning process (Gundogmus, 2018). This is caused by a shortage of motivation, support and guidance from both parents. Some teachers are facing inadequate professional experience (Gundogmus, 2018).

Due to this challenge, most newly appointed educators face stress and tension caused by lack of professional experience.

Overcrowded classrooms are one of the issues which teachers are facing when they teach learners at school. The quality of teaching and learning can be impacted by overcrowded classroom. When a classroom is overcrowded, it means that educators have a lot of schoolwork, and they can experience challenges when it comes to marking learners' activities after assessing them. Learners may get poor attention and support to motivate effective learning. According to Kandumbu (2017), huge size of a classroom causes impact on language learning, because majority of teachers are confused about managing overcrowded classrooms. Hanna (2020) claims that effective learning and teaching in school is promoted by learning materials and resources. Therefore, when there is a shortage or unavailability of teaching and learning resources, there is serious problem for language teaching in various schools, especially for the newly revised curriculum of 2015. Provision of learning resources and materials at school is government responsibility. As such, the government is the one to be blamed when there is a shortage of learning materials. Implementing self-discovery learning approach can be hindered by the shortage of learning materials. When learners face a grammatical challenge, it may be the results of poor learning and teaching resources. Nghixulifwa, (2021) confirm that Namibian schools are desperate due to this challenge, and the Ministry of Education has been informed about this issue of scarcity of basic education resources that hinder learners for receiving quality education.

Maemeko, Ntabi and Nkengbeza (2017) posit that the ability to develop school culture and high-quality instructions of school achievement can be impacted or hindered by educational resources. The researcher found that learners in Namibia at most primary schools are forced to share textbooks that are available due to the shortage. Learners` writing skill in English is inhibited by the scarcity of learning support materials. This makes it more challenging, especially for teachers to set goals in education and achieve quality education (Kandumbu, 2017). Learners facing this issue struggle to produce written tasks which are error free.

2.18. How do social media influence grammatical errors?

Learners spend more time on social media, whereas we are aware that social media is useful in educational activities, but also learners' writing skill is negatively influenced by social media. Kaplan, Kangira at el (2010) define social media as a website that allows people to create and share their ideas in social networking. According to Kirschner and Kangira at el (2010), learners can benefit from social media because they can be able to communicate with their teachers using social media for educational purpose, but at the same time, it can affect their grammar competence because they become addicted on it in such a way that they even neglect to check their usage of grammar while typing. When learners use social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and others, they use slang language which can influence spelling errors.

Most learners use social media for entertainment, and they do not have time to read books or to focus on their schoolwork. Social media is becoming one of the biggest challenges influencing grammatical errors committed by learners. Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter and etc are kinds of social media platforms which are currently most used. Roelofse (2019) contends that impact on how second language learners perceive the world is the result of how they are exposed to social media literacy. The following words are commonly used by learners when using WhatsApp which results in grammatical errors: hi, slp, wen, nvr, dat, de', so when they write their schoolwork (creative essays), they end up using those words as they are more familiar to those words in daily life. Molla, Bazgir, Mustaquim, Siddique and Siddique (2024) point out that twitter as one of the social media platforms, it contains 140 characters which a person can use to express their thoughts. As for twitter and other social media platforms, what matters is that you deliver the message using few words, we can say grammar is neglected. On social media grammar and spelling checks are neglected.

2.19. How do dialects influence grammatical errors?

According to Bonga (2020) dialect is a regional variety of language differentiated by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and comprising together with them a single language.

Dialects can effectively influence grammatical errors because they can have grammatical discrepancies, which may lead to errors when writing or speaking.

The school in questions is located where people are multilingual; there are Vhalobedu, who speak Khelobedu, a Sesotho sa Leboa dialect. Tshironga is a Tshivenḓa dialect influenced by Xitsonga from Malamulele area. When learners find themselves in a situation like this, they face grammatical error challenges when they write their schoolwork. Although educators can encourage them to use standard language when they write their schoolwork, it is always not possible. This could be because learners speak dialects different from standard language, at home and school's playground. According to Leshabane (2020) Khelobedu and Sotho-Tswana language are similar, and Tshivenda and Khelobedu language are intelligible mutual in such a way that Khelobedu speakers can communicate with Venḓa speakers effectively without challenges. Khelobedu as a dialect could have been categorized as an independent language or as Sepedi dialect. For example, Sepedi has higher mutual intelligibility with Southern Sotho and Setswana than with Khelobedu. Most Khelobedu speakers only learn to speak Sepedi at school. Where the selected school is situated, some learners speak Khelobedu at home, but at school they learn through standard Tshivenḓa Home Language, and they commit many grammatical errors when they write Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays. Balatun (2018) conducted a study on grammatical errors, and the findings indicates that, learners commit several errors in their work and the topmost influencing factor was dialect.

2.20. CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed research literature on grammatical errors made by learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative essays. The following themes are outlined in this chapter: role of the theory in the study, creative essay, mechanical errors, grammatical errors, causes of learners` inability to learn writing skills effectively, the importance of grammar in writing, what is errors, the significance of error analysis, Mistakes and errors, taxanomy of errors in writing, language transfer, causes of language errors, reading as a cause of grammatical errors, The importance of teaching grammar in Tshivenda HL classes and How do grammatical errors affect learners` writing skills, Challenges faced by teachers in teaching writing skills, How social media influence grammatical errors,It focused on creative writing in light of Grade 7 learners from the chosen school. It is observed that Grade 7 learners from

that school are facing a challenge of grammatical errors when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative essays which impact their writing skills and lead to poor performance. The researcher reviewed different studies which are in no way like this study. Even though there are studies relevant to this study, the researcher identified that there are gaps remaining. As such, the researcher sought to address them in this study. The researcher conducts this study to fill the remaining gap about grammatical errors which Grade 7 learners make when writing creative essays of Tshivenda Home Language as a subject. The next chapter which is chapter 3 describes methodology used to collect truthful data as aimed by this research.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines and discusses the methodology that underpinned the research-to-research techniques in this research to evaluate the grammatical errors experienced by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative essays. According to Ganesha, and Aithal (2022) research methodology is the process used to identify, select, process, and analyze data about a certain topic. The following sub-sections are covered in this chapter: research approach, research design, research paradigm, population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria, significance of the study and ethical consideration.

3.2. RESEARCH APROACH

Research approach is the procedure adopted by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data (Priya, 2016). This study adopted qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is concerned with understanding how individuals interpret their experiences, how they manufacture their words, and meaning they relate to their experiences (Collins, Neely and Khan, 2024). Qualitative research approach helped the researcher to find extensive ideas about grammatical errors experienced by Grade 7 learners as a problem of concern in this study. The rationale of using qualitative approach in this study was that it was useful in outlining social and educational challenges, as the researcher was looking on educational and social problems. Mandor (2021) states that, using qualitative approach in the study helps to provide a richer and an in-depth understanding of learners' errors. Through using qualitative research approach, the researcher hoped to interpret the findings from the participants correctly and be able to get clear understanding about the research topic.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Taherdoost (2022), research design is a strategy that researchers use to respond to a set of planned questions. Furthermore, Taherdoost (2022) states that research design is a work schedule that involves how researchers collect, analyse and interpret data. In other words, the research design guides the researcher on how the problem of the study can be explored. According to Nkgadima (2022), research design is useful in identifying subjects, sites of the research and procedures of data collection to respond to the question of the study. The researcher adopted case study design in this study, where intrinsic case study was employed as one example of case study design. Willing & Rogers (2017) point out that a case study research design is a method of conducting research focusing on an instance, incident or a unit of something. The researcher believes that case study design was useful in finding out, describing and explaining grammatical errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative essays. Under case study design, intrinsic case study was employed. Hunziker and Blankenagel, (2024) define intrinsic case study as an example of case study research design which focuses on studying a unique phenomenon. Intrinsic case study allows the researcher to look for specific characteristics. This design was therefore appropriate for this research project, as the researcher managed to focus on one grade which was Grade 7, as they were experiencing this challenge of grammatical errors when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative essays.

3.4. RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Chafe, (2024) a paradigm refers to the beliefs and assumptions that provide the structure for your study. Interpretivist paradigm was adopted in this study. According to Stephen (2022), interpretivist paradigm is an approach that leads researchers to focus on achieving subjective information for instances where individual or smaller groups are investigated in-depth through complete observation and thoughts. Therefore, this paradigm was helpful as the researcher was able to collect data from participants that were experiencing this challenge. Also, this study used

interpretivism paradigm because of its balance with a qualitative approachh. This allows the researchers to gain a better understanding of the challenges learners are facing and how they were able to solve them, and it assists in interpreting knowledge in multiple ways **(**Pervin, & Mokhtar, 2022). Therefore, the researcher believes that through using Interpretivist paradigm, it allowed the researcher to understand and interpret human behaviour, realities and experiences without predetermined findings. Lastly, Interpretivist paradigm was adopted in this study because the researcher collected first hand data from Grade 7 learners and their teachers concerning grammatical errors challenges that they faced.

3.5. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.5.1. Population

Disman, Alim & Barliana (2017) defines population as a group of all people that the researcher wants to use to find conclusions about the research topic. The circuit in which a selected school is located has 29 schools, of which 22 are primary schools and 7 are secondary schools. To maintain anonymity, the school in the study was identified as school in question. School in question has 336 learners, 10 educators and 1 principal. This school starts from Grade R-7. The focus of this study is on senior phase learners doing Grade 7 and the selected class had 53 learners.

3.5.2. Sampling

Leavy (2017) views sampling as a selection of several individual cases from a larger population. According to Bhandari, Krahmer and Raskar, (2020), sampling is the specific group that a researcher collects data from. The sample of the study was made up of Grade 7 learners. The researcher used simple random sampling to select 9 Grade 7 learners to be the participants. The only educator who teaches this Grade 7 in Tshivenda Home Language was purposively sampled. The reason why the researcher adopted this type of sampling method is because it gives everyone a chance to be selected. In other words, it is unbiased. This means that the Grade 7 learners learning Tshivenda Home Language from selected school were given equal opportunity to be selected in the study.

The researcher wrote numbers 1 up to 9 pieces of papers, then 44 pieces of papers were not written anything. Then written papers mixed with unwritten papers on a small basket, and each learner was asked to pick one piece of paper from a small bucket. Learners who picked piece of papers written number 1-9 became participants in the study. (Why using this method). This is supported by Johnson (2017) when alluding that simple random sampling allows all members of the population to have equal opportunities to form part of the sample.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION

Creswell (2017) defines data collection as the procedure undertaken to collect data using unstructured or semi-structured interview, observations, documents, and visual materials, as well as following the rules for recording information. In this study, structured interviews, non-participant observation and document review were used to obtain data relevant to the study`s aim and objectives.

3.6.1. Structured interview

According to De la Croix, Barrett & Stenfors (2018), structured questions are a set of questions that are in a set order and are helpful for a researcher to see patterns among responses. This further allows the researcher to easily compare responses between participants while keeping other factors constant. Kallio, Pietila, Johnso& Kangsniemi (2016) refer to structured interview as a data collection method that depends on collecting data on a topic by asking questions that are in a set order. In this study, one Tshivenda Home Language educator and nine sampled learners from Grade 7 were interviewed. The researcher used structured interview because this type of interview was able to give all participants equal experience during interview, since they were asked the same questions. Learners and their educator were asked different set of questions. (Learners questions and for educator are in appendix J) Thus, the interviews were conducted with one educator and 9 learners to better understand issues related to errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing creative essays. Structured interview mitigates research biasness and leads to higher reliability and validity. Because of structured interview questions, the researcher was able to collect information that was trustworthy as participants were unable to exchange their answers. The researcher was also able to compare participants` responses. This was

because they were asked same questions separately. This was helpful because the researcher was able to see patterns among participants` responses and also compare those responses, in the meantime keeping other factors constant.

3.6.2. Non-Participant Observation

William (2022) points out that non-participant observation is when someone observes a target group in their activities. Non-participant observation gives the researcher opportunity to observe the problems as they naturally occur, collect real-time participants' behaviours and expressions (Nkgadima, 2022). The researcher visited Grade 7 classroom with observation schedule during Tshivenda Home Language lesson delivery when an educator was teaching creative essays writing skills. The researcher was writing some notes about what she had observed.

This kind of observation managed to help the researcher to monitor whether the educator was applying correct writing skills principles as recommended by the CAPS (2011) policy document. Therefore, the researcher was able to observe how an educator presented a lesson and how learners responded in a natural situation. The researcher also used audio recordings. This is because the audio recordings can secure incidents or information that might not have been captured through non-participant observation while collecting data. (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2020). The researcher was able to collect data with deeper understanding of the research problem for Grade 7 learners committing grammatical errors when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative essays.

3.6.3. Document review

According to Balconi and Spitzman (2021) document review is a process of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. Documents such as learners' essay scripts were used as part of data collection during documents review. Nine sampled learners were asked to write creative essays using same topic, then the researcher collected those scripts and marked them. The researcher evaluated all the scripts and managed to examine grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing creative essays in the selected school. After this process, the researcher collected the scripts

to use as the evidence during analysis and wrote down all grammatical errors committed by learners in their essays.

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

According to Calzon (2023), data analysis is the methods in which data is collected and organized so that the researcher will be able to look at the data and determine relationships. Moreover, Jackson and Bazeley (2019) claims that data analysis is a process of summarizing collected data. Data collected through interviews from Tshivenda Home Language Grade 7 learners and their educator were analyzed through inductive thematic analyses. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) view inductive thematic analysis as a procedure to identify themes or patterns from data without preconceptions. Inductive thematic analysis helped the researcher to analyze research data as it assists to identify important themes or patterns in the data and be able to use them to address the research problem. Braun and Clarke (2006) as cited in Maguire and Delahunt (2017) present linear six-phased method of inductive thematic analysis process. This includes becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and writing-up. Thus, the data collected through structured interviews were presented narratively in line with the thematic analysis phases outlined above. Vaismoradi and Snelgrove (2019) point out that thematic analysis leads to deeper understandings of complex human phenomena for designing interventions for education, research and practice facilitates evaluating the results of data analysis and improves research credibility. Through analyzing data, the researcher used logical gathered data which the readers benefit including department of education and policy implemention.

3.7.1. Analyzing data from structured interview

Researcher analyzed interview data by listening to the audio recorded during data collection and transcribe important information using inductive thematic analysis. According to Proudfoot, (2023), inductive thematic analysis as a process of coding the information without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame. This was helpful in this study because the researcher was able to familiarize with all data collected during structured interview through reading and re-reading the transcripts. Because of structured interview, the researcher was able to identify all grammatical errors

committed by Grade 7 learners. Transcripts enable the researcher to identify potential codes and themes for the study.

3.7.2. Analyzing data from non-participant observation

Data collected through non-participant observation from grade 7 learners facing grammatical errors when writing creative essays in Tshivenda Home Language was analyzed through inductive thematic analysis. According to Basaffar and Almasri (2017), inductive thematic analysis is an analysis which entails deriving meaning and identifying themes from data with no presumptions. This type of thematic analysis was useful, because the researcher managed to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within the data. The researcher managed to go through video and notes collected during non-participant observation. The researcher checked all collected data that was concluded during the observation processes for analysis. All information collected was written down and analysed through themes. Also, the video recorded during an observation was helpful for the researcher to be able to refer to to emphasize if there is nothing important forgotten.

3.7.3. Document review

The researcher adopted content analysis to analyze document review. According to Barton (2024), content analysis refers to a research method used to identify patterns in recorded communication. This method was helpful because it was used to identify themes in various texts. Tshivenda Home Language creative essays scripts were revised and analyzed. The current study reviewed the creative essays of Grade 7 learners as a data collection tool. The researcher wrote down all grammatical errors committed by learners from their creative essays and was very helpful as the researcher was able to see if there are common grammatical errors among learners. All grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners were categorized into codes and analyzed thematically.

3.8. QUALITY CRITERIA

Quality criteria refer to the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the research process and the findings (Nelson and Crow, 2014). Quality criteria for all qualitative

research are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Each of the above sub-topics is discussed below:

3.8.1. Credibility

Moser and Korstjens (2018) define credibility as a way of putting confidence in the truth of the research findings which are acceptable and come from participants. Chauke (2022) claims that credibility is a degree of reliability of the study based on the accuracy of the analysis of data and the participants' original views. To ensure credibility, the researcher recorded and analyzed collected data and presented it in a fair and unbiased manner. This means that the researcher-maintained credibility in this study by using data which is credible based on the collected data from participants. Secondly, the researcher collected data in different contexts to make certain that the picture provided in the research is as full and complete as it can be. Lastly, the researcher collected data over a long period of time to ensure that the participants become used to the researcher and thus behave naturally.

3.8.2. Confirmability

According to Haq, Rasheed, Rashid, and Akhter (2023) confirmability refer to the fairness of research during the process of data collection and analysis. To ensure confirmability in this study, the researcher provided an audit trail that ensured that participants` thoughts are not coloured in sensible and insensible bias but provide original findings from the participants. The researcher also ensured that there was confirmability through confirming the original recordings of the interviews and the transcriptions thereof.

3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability includes evaluation of participants about the findings and recommendations in the research to ascertain that collected data precisely represent what was acquired from the participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Dependability is like consistency and reliability in quantitative research. To attain dependability, the researcher asked participants to review the patterns in the data. The study used triangulation, which involves using multiple research techniques and multiple sources

of data to explore the issues from all feasible perspectives. Using the technique of triangulation ensured dependability.

3.8.4. Transferability

According to Moser and Korstjens (2018), transferability is the process where research outcomes can be transferred to related settings or context. With transferability, the researcher discloses the context of the study and a complete description of the study to the participants, so that readers can determine to what extent the findings might be applicable to other contexts (Stalmeijer, Brown,and O'Brien,2024). In the current study, the researcher makes sure that transferability is employed by providing readers with evidence that the research study`s findings was applicable to other contexts, situations and populations.

3.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to Creswell (2017), significance of the study denotes the importance of the research findings to different people that may benefit from reading the study. The recommendations of the study helped as follows:

- This research will help learners at school to improve their essay writing skills, especially those who commit grammatical errors in a way that they will write proper creative essays, and they perform well without committing grammatical errors because of this study.
- Educators will benefit from this research because they will be informed about the strategies and methods of teaching writing skills through this study.
- The school also will benefit from this study because the results of learners will improve, and no similar resources will be wasted on the learners who will repeat a grade. In other words, resources will no longer be wasted.
- Learners' parents will benefit from this study as their learners will perform well at school, and they will be able to secure better future and become better members of the society.
- Curriculum advisors will adopt this research to identify grammatical errors experienced by learners and be able to train educators' strategies on how they are supposed to teach learners writing skills.

- Department of Basic Education also benefits from this research as the pass rate of learners facing this challenge increased, and resources (e.g., books) will be saved because there will be no need to use resources on the same learners because they will be progressing.

3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Bhandura (2022) defines ethical considerations in research as the rules or principles that guide research designs and practices. To ensure that ethical considerations are adhered to, all ethical inferences were considered and followed throughout this study as discussed below. The researcher maintained ethical considerations by sticking to the following ethical consideration principles: permission to conduct a study, informed consent letters, Confidentiality, Anonymity, Benefits and Voluntary participation in the study, and Protection from harm were considered.

3.10.1. Permission to conduct a study

According to Hwang, (2023), permission to conduct research is a formal request to obtain permission from an organization or individual to conduct research on a particular topic. The ethical integrity of the study was maintained by seeking permission from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) as the appropriate committee in the institution for any research involving human beings. After getting permission from TREC from University of Limpopo, the researcher also asked permission from Department of Basic Education to conduct this study at the school in question. The selected school's principal was asked for permission to conduct this research. The researcher also wrote a request letter to all stakeholders that must grant permission to formally conduct the research at the selected school.

3.10.2. Informed Consent and Assent Letter

Arifin (2018) points out that, informed consent is a situation in which participants accept and understand all information they require to decide if they can consider participating in the study or not. Informed consent is crucial to ensure participants' rights and privacy are fully protected (Steneck, 2023). Participants were provided with a consent form and assent form to sign.

The researcher ensued that all parents or guardians whom their learners were selected, give authority on behalf of the learners through signing consent forms, whilst all selected Grade 7 learners were given assent form to sign as a way of ensuring that they agreed with what their parents were giving consent for. Furthermore, an educator who was participating in this study was also given informed consent form to sign, as well as a way of agreeing to be part of the study.

3.10.3. Anonymity and Confidentiality

According to Bandari (2023), anonymity is the concealment of the participants' identity. The researcher ensured that there is anonymity among all participants by not writing their names or any information that may lead to personal identity in the study. Instead of writing participants' personal information, the researchers identified them as participant A, B, C and etc. Personally, identifying information includes, but is not limited to names, addresses, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and government issued ID numbers. To ensure anonymity, the participants' identities were withheld, and their names were not required in the interview instrument. Confidentiality refers to the obligation of researchers to prevent unauthorized access to collected data from the participants (Reno, 2021). The researcher ensured confidentiality through treating collected data from the participants with utmost confidentiality and kept it secret. All devices storing collected data from participants were locked in the cabinet and codes were substituted as a way of ensuring confidentiality.

3.10.4. Benefits and Voluntary participation in the study

According to Callahan, (2019) benefit is a value or desired outcome, or an advantage. All participants in this study were informed that there will be no material benefit or any form of payment to be gained for their participation in the study. Arifin (2018) claims that it is essential to make it clear at the beginning of the study with all participants that there will not be any repercussions to their refusal to participate. According to Arifin (2018), voluntary participation, participants are free to opt in or out of the study at any point in time. Thus, all participants were informed before participation that their involvement in this study is voluntary. Furthermore, the researcher informed participants about their right to withdraw their participation at any time without being

punished, and that they would not be forced to answer any questions that they feel uncomfortable with.

3.10.5. Protection form harm, risks and benefits

According to Arifin (2018), types of harm which can be kept to an absolute minimum are physical, social, legal and psychological. The researcher ensured this by not linking what participants said during the interviews with their personal identities. The participants were not exposed to physical or emotional suffering during and after the research process. The researcher refrained from using inappropriate words that may lead to participants' emotional harm. As some of the participants responses may lead to social or physical harm, the researcher treated all responses from participants with confidentiality.

3.10.6. How participants will be protected from stigmatization by fellow learners?

Participants were protected from stigmatization. The researcher started by educating all learners about the importance of this study, including those who were not selected. Learners were taught to treat everyone with dignity, respect and support for those who were participating in this study, and they were warned not to bring negative attitudes and behaviour.

3.11. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology adopted to solve the research problem. A plan that combined all the major components of the research to work together. It also presented research approach, research design, research paradigm, and population which were used to come up with solution about the problem in the study. Sampling and strategies used to sample all participants charted in this chapter were charted in this study. Data collection, analysis procedures, quality criteria, significance of the study and ethical considerations that were followed in the study were designated in this study. Furthermore, measures that were followed in order to enhance the quality of the research results were also outlined.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore grammatical errors made by the Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language Creative essays. The study utilized qualitative research methodology to gain a deeper understanding of the learners' and educators' experiences with the phenomenon being investigated. This approach involved conducting structured interviews with both the learners and the educator to gather rich, descriptive insights into their perspectives. Additionally, the study employed non-participant observations and document analysis to identify common grammatical errors made by Grade 7 learners while writing creative essays. These methods were chosen to provide a comprehensive view of the learners' writing practices and the specific challenges they face in grammar when writing creative essays

This chapter is dedicated to presenting, analyzing, and interpreting the data collected throughout the study. It begins with an overview of the demographic profile of the participants, which sets the context for understanding the findings and the relevance of their experiences. The subsequent sections explore the themes that emerged from the interviews, observations, and document analysis, offering a thorough examination of the factors contributing to the grammatical issues identified.

4.2. **Participants' Demographic Profile**

This section presents the demographic profile of all participants. Participants' demographic profile helped the researcher to find out the age, gender and home language at which learners commit grammatical errors mostly.

4.2.1. **Table A: Learners Demographic Profile**

Leaners	**Gender**	**Age**	**Role**	**Home Language**
Learner A	Female	12 years	Learner	Tshivenda

Learner B	Female	12 years	Learner	Tshivenda
Learner C	Male	15 years	Learner	KheLobedu
Learner D	Male	13 years	Learner	Tshivenda
Learner E	Male	12 years	Learner	Tshivenda
Learner F	Female	14 years	Learner	Xitsonga
Learner G	Male	12 years	Learner	Tshivenda
Learner H	Female	13 years	Learner	Sepedi
Learner I	Female	13 years	Learner	Tshivenda

The table above presents the demographic profile of the learners, detailing their gender with 5 females and 4 males. Their ages range from 12 to 15 years. Additionally, the table shows the language distribution among the learners: 6 speak Tshivenda, 1 speaks Sepedi, 1 speaks Xitsonga, and 1 speaks KheLobedu.

4.2.2. **Educator Demographic Profile**

Participants	**Gender**	**Age**	**Role**	**Home Language**	**Qualification**
Educator	Male	56 years	Educator	Tshivenda	Bachelor of Education

4.3. **STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

The researcher used structured interviews as the data collection method, asking the learners the same set of questions. The educator, however, was asked a different set of questions tailored specifically for them. A total of nine learners, selected through simple random sampling, participated in the interview, along with one educator who was automatically included as he was the only one teaching Tshivenda Home Language in Grade 7. Both the learners' and educator's responses were given verbally, and the researcher audio-recorded and transcribed their answers.

4.3.1**. INTERVIEW WITH LEARNERS**

The following questions were asked to learners:

Question 1 Tshivenḓa version: Ni vhona u nga ndi zwifhio zwivhangi zwa vhukhakhi ha girama musi ni tshi ṅwala maanea a vhusiki?

English version: What do you think are the causes of grammatical errors when you are writing creative essays?

The above research question seeks to find out the causes of grammatical errors experienced by the Grade 7 learners when writing creative essays.

Learners' Responses:

Learner A:

> "Mugudisi wanga a vha funesi u funza girama, fhedzi vha fhedzesa tshifhinga tshinzhi vha tshi khou funza nga zwiṅwe" ("My educator prefers to teach other aspects than grammar rules")

Learner B:

> "Nḓe ndi vhona u nga zwi itwa ngauri a ri na bugu dza u vhala dzine dza nga ri thusa u khwinifhadza luambo na girama, mugudisi vha ri itela dzi khophi musi vha tshi ṱoḓa u ri vhalisa". ("I think the cause is that we don't have reading books to improve our language and grammar skills, so our teacher makes copies for us every time we are expected to learn grammar or when we learn writing skills.")

Learners C:

> **"**Nḓe musi ndo no ṅwala a thi vhalululi, zwi ita uri ndi balelwe u vhona vhukhakhi he nda ita kha maanea anga". ("After writing, I don't proofread, and this leads me to unable to notice my mistakes in my essays")

Learner D:

> "Nḓe a thi ḓivhi milayo ya girama nahone a thi dzuleli u funziwa pfunzo ya nga ha girama i tshi funziwa nga mugudisa wanga". ("I am not aware of grammatical rules, and my educator teaches about grammar after a while")

Learner E:

“Nṋe Tshivenḓa ndi vhona tshi tshi konḓa, a tshi fani na luambo lune nda lu shumisa ndi tshi khou ṅwala milaedza nga ṱhingokhwalwa”. (“Tshivenḓa is a difficult subject, and it is different compared to the one that I use when writing massages using phone”)

Learner F:

“Kha nṋe zwi itiswa ngauri luambo lwa Tshivenḓa a si lwa ḓamuni, zwino ndi khou tou lu guda henefha tshikoloni”. (“On my side, this is because Tshivenḓa is not my home language, so I am only learning this language at school”)

Learner G:

“Nṋe ndi ya konḓelwa nga luambo ulu na kuṅwalele kwa hone”. (“I am struggling with this language and its writing format”)

Learner H:

“Zwi khou itiswa nga u sa ḓinea tshifhinga tsha u guda luambo lwa Tshivenḓa”. (“Because I don’t give myself time to learn Tshivenḓa language”)

Learner I:

“Ndi vhona u nga zwi khou itiswa ngauri Tshivenḓa tshi ya konḓa musi u tshi khou ṅwala”. (“I think this is because Tshivenda is difficult when you write it”)

Question 2

Tshivenda version: Ni a vhuya na ḓimanḓafhadza nga u guda milayo ya girama na u ṅwala maanea a vhusiki a Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani ni noṱhe?

English version: Do you ever empower yourselves by studying grammatical rules and writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays at home?

The above research question seeks to find out if learners are motivated enough to learn and study grammatical rules and writing skills on their own.

Learners' responses:

Learner A:

"Hai, nn̓e ndi ṅwala maanea musi mugudisi o ri fha uri ri ṅwale nahone milayo ya girama ndi i pfa zwenezwo mugudisi a tshi khou funza".

(*"I only write essays when my teacher asks me to, and I only hear grammatical rules when the educator is teaching. Honestly, I don't study grammatical rules and writing skills on my own".)*

Learner B:

"Nn̓e ndi pfesesa uri maanea ha gudiwi kuṅwalele ngauri ṱhoho dzi ya shanduka misi yoṱhe u tshi ṅwala, zwino ndi lindela mugudisi a tshi n̓ea uri ndi ṅwala tshikoloni".

("I think there is no need to learn essay writing skills, because every time you will be given different topics, so I just wait for the educator to give me work about writing an essay")

Learners C:

"Nn̓e a thi ṅwali ngauri maanea ha ṱoḓi u vhaliwa zwino ndi lindela u ṅwalisiwa nga tshifhinga tsha mulingo kana thesite tshikoloni".

("I don't write, I just wait for essay test at school")

Learner D:

"U ya nga nn̓e maanea ha dini zwino a thi iti nḓowe-nḓowe ya u a ṅwala sa izwi a sa vhaliwi".

("According to me, essays are not difficult, so there is no need to practice how to write this task")

Learner E:

"Nn̓e a thi ṅwali sa izwi na uri ndi ṅwalise hani ndi ndoṱhe ndi sa zwi pfesesi".

("I don't write because I am not aware, and I don't understand on how to write essays alone")

Learner F:

"Nn̓e ndi ṅwala fhedzi ndo n̓eiwa mushumo nga mugudisi tshikoloni".

("I only write this activity only when asked to write it at school")

Learner G:

"A thi ṅwali, fhedzi nda n̓eiwa nd̓owedzo kana tshuṅwahaya ndi ya ṅwala".

("I don't write, but if I am given a classwork or homework I write")

Learner H:

"Nn̓e a thi ṅwali ngauri zwi nga si korekiwe nga muthu, zwino ndi pfa hu u d̓ifhedzela tshifhinga".

("I don't write because there is no one who will mark the scripts, so I think is a waste of time")

Learner I:

***"**A thi ṅwali nahone a thi athu vhuya nda zwi humbula uri zwi ya itiwa".*
("I don't write, and I never thought I can do that")

Question 3

Tshivenda version: Ndi afhio masiandaitwa a no vhangwa nga vhukhakhi ha girama musi ni tshi ṅwala maan̓ea a vhusiki?

English version: What are the negative impacts caused by grammatical errors when you write creative essays?

Learners' response:

Learner A:

U kona girama zwi thusa uri mushumo wanga u pfukise mulaedza une nda t̓od̓a u u pfukisa u tshi pfala. Girama ya anda vhukhakhi, zwi ita uri

ndi ṅwale zwithu zwi sa pfali nahone zwa sa pfukise mulaedza une nda khou ṱoḓa u u pfukisa".

("To be competent in grammar helps my work in clarity and precision, to express my ideas clearly and precisely. If my grammar is riddled with errors, it will not convey the intended meaning")

Learner B:

"Nṋe ndi vhona masiandaitwa hu a u wana maraga dza fhasi zwa ita uri ndi feile Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani"

("On my side I think disadvantage is to get lower marks, which makes me to fail Tshivenḓa Home Language")

Learners C:

"Ndi ṅwala zwithu zwi sa vhalei zwa ita uri tshiṅwe tshifhinga ndi ṅwale zwithu zwi sa ambi ngauri nda vha ndo khakha".

("I wrote unreadable tasks which cause my work to be meaningless because of grammatical errors. An educator may not feel comfortable reading my work and as such he can give me lower scores, because, although my work might have important message, grammatical errors will make it unreadable")

Learner D:

"Zwi ita uri mugudisi a tshi vhala maanea anga vha si a pfesese nahone a balelwe u a tevhelela".

("When my educator reads my essays, it is difficult to read with understanding")

Learner E:

"Nṋe mudededzi vha dzulela u mbudza uri ndi khou phasela fhasi Tshivenḓa ngauri a thi khou wana maraga dza vhuḓi kha maanea zwi tshi khou itiswa nga vhukhakhi vhune nda ita musi ndi tshi ṅwala".

("My educator always tells me that I am underperforming due to my lower marks I am getting from my essays")

Learner F:

"Ndi u feila kana u wana maraga dza fhasi". ("To fail and accumulate lower marks")

Learner G:

"Ndi u ṅwala mafhungo a sa ambi nahone a sa vhalei". ("Is to write unreadable and meaningless tasks")

Learner H:

"Nn̰e zwi ita uri ndi pfe ndi tshi nyama tshifhinga tsho ṱ he ndi tshi tea u ṅwala maanea".

("Makes me to feel discouraged every time when I want to write an essay")

Learner I:

***"**Ndi u ṅwala mafhungo a sa tevhelelei nga muvhali". ("To write tasks which are difficult to be understood")*

Question 4

In Tshivenḓa version: Ndi zwifhio zwiṅwe zwiitisi zwi no ita uri ni ite vhukhakhi ha girama?

In English version: What are other factors causing you to experience grammatical errors?

The above research question requires learners to explain various causes which make them to be involved in grammatical errors.

Learner`s response:

Learner A:"

"Nn̰e ndi fhedzesa tshifhinga ndi kha ṱ hingokhwala yanga ndi tshi khou amba na khonani dzanga nga whatsapp".

("I spend a lot of time on my smartphone, charting with my friends using whatsapp")

Learner B:

"Nn̰e ndi vhona unga zwi itiswa ngauri hayani ndi dzula na mme anga vhane ndi mulobedu, zwino vha tshi thusa luambo lwa Tshivenḓa a vha tou vha na nḓivho nnzhi na lwo vha ya ita vhukhakhi kha zwiṅwe".

("I think it is because at home I stay with my mother and she is Lobedu originally, and she is unable to assist me with Tshivenḓa as she is not familiar with this language")

Learners C:

"Nn̰e ndi dzula ndi tshi khou shumisa founu yanga ndi tshi khou amba na vhaṅwe nga facebook".

("Mostly I used my smartphones talking with my friends using Facebook")

Learner D:

"Tshikoloni a ri funziwi nga girama, nn̰e ndi Mutsonga nahone hayani ri amba nga Xitsonga zwino milayo ya girama ya luambo lwa Tshivenḓa a thi i pfesesi".

("At school they don't teach us about grammar and I am Tsonga originally, I don't understand grammar rules of Tshivenḓa")

Learner E:

"Nn̰e ndi vhona u nga zwi khou itiswa nga u sa vha na bugu dzine ra n̰eiwa tshikoloni dzi no tou amba nga ha girama na milayo ya hone".

("I think this is because at school they don't give use books which outlined grammar rules")

Learner F:

***"**Ndi ngauri a thi koni u shumisa zwiga zwa u vhala". ("Because I am not familiar when it comes to using punctuation marks")*

Learner G:

“Nn̓e a thi koni u ita uri mafhungo anga a tevhekane a lunzhedzane”. (“I am unable connect my sentences”)

Learner H:

“Nn̓e ndi ṅwala maipfi nga nḍila i si yone”. (“I write words incorrectly”)

Learner I:

“A thi koni u shumisa maleḓere danzhi na maṱuku”. (“I am unable to use capital and small letters”)

Question 5.

Tshivenda version: Luambo lune vhone vha amba lu na ṯhuṯhuwedzo naa ya dziṅwe nyambo kana lwavho luambo ndi Tshivenḓa tsha siṱandadi?

English version: Does the language you speak have an influence of other languages or do you speak standard Tshivenḓa language?

Learner A

“Hai,ngauri nn̓e ndi amba Tshivenḓa Luambo Hayani lwo ṯambaho lu sa ṯuṯuwedzwi nga dziṅwe nyambo ”

(“No, because I speak Tshivenḓa standard language without an influence of other languages”)

Learner B

“Nn̓e ndi amba Tshivenḓa fhedzi hu ya vha na ṯhuṯhuwedzo ya Xitsonga sa izwi ro dzulelana na u malelana na Vatsongo”.

(“I speak Tshivenda Home Language with an influence of Xitsonga because we stay together with them and we are intermarriage with them”)

Learner C

“Kha nn̓e ṯ̓huṯ̓huwedzo i hone ya luambo lwa Khelobedu ngauri hune nda dzula hone vhunzhi ha vhathu vha amba luambo ulu, zwi ḓ̓i nga na makhulu wanga vha tou vha muambi vhukuma wa luambo lwa Khelobedu”

(“On my side there is an influence of Khelobedu, because where I stay most people speak this language and even my grandmother speak Khelobedu frequently”)

Learner D

“Luambo lune nda amba lwone a lu na ṯ̓huṯ̓huwedzo ya dziṅwe nyambo, ndi amba Tshivenḓ̓a tsho tambaho”.

(“The language I speak is not influenced by other languages; I speak Tshivenḓ̓a standard language”)

Learner E

“Luambo lune nda amba lwone lu na ṯ̓huṯ̓huwedzo ya Sepedi sa izwo hune nda dzula hone ro dzulelana na vhathu vha no amba luambo ulwo, nahone ndi dovha nda vha na mashaka vhane musi ndi tshi vha dalela ri amba nga luambo ulwo lwa Sepedi”

(“The language I speak has the influence of Sepedi because they are our neighbours, also I have some relatives who are Pedi and when I visit them, we speak Sepedi”)

Learner F

“Luambo lune nda amba lu na ṯ̓huṯ̓huwedzo ya Xitsonga, ngauri tsini na hune nda dzula hone hu na mivhundu ya Vatsonga, izwo zwi ita uri ndi ambe luambo lwa Tshivenḓ̓a lu re na ṯ̓huṯ̓huwedzo ya Xitsonga. Iyo dialekiti ine nda amba pfi Tshironga” Zwino musi ndi tshi ṅwala maanea ndi mbo ḓ̓i shumisa nayo

(“Language that I speak have an influence of Xitsonga, this is because where I stay our village is next to where Vatsonga stays. The name of the dialect is Tshironga and when I write essays, I also use it.”)

Learner G

“A thi vhoni ndi tshi amba luambo lu re na ṱhuṱhuwedzo ya dziṅwe nyambo, sa izwi ndi tshi amba Tshivenḓa fhedzi nahone a thi divhi dziṅwe nyamba”

(“I don’t think language I speak have an influence of other languages because I speak Tshivenḓa only and I am not familiar with other languages”)

Learner H

“Nṋe a thi ambi luambo lu re na ṱhuṱhuwedzo na dziṅwe nyambo” (“I don’t speak language with an influence of other languages”)

Learner I

“Nṋe ndi ya amba luambo lu re na ṱhuṱhuwedzo ya dziṅwe nyambo sa izwi ndi tshi kundelwa u amba luambo lwo ṱambaho, ndi ita ndi tshi dzhenisa na maṅwe a maipfi a sa wanalei kha luambo lwa Tshivenḓa (“when I speak there is an influence of other languages, because when I speak, I use some words which are not part of Tshivenḓa standard language”)

4.3.2. INTERVIEW WITH AN EDUCATOR

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	EDUCATOR’S RESPONSES
1. How do you teach Tshivenḓa Home Language writing skills? - The above question seeks an educator to enlighten about methods he uses to teach Tshivenḓa Home Language writing skills.	“I am aware that writing is not a one-time event, but a process that includes various steps. That is why I prefer to employ different teaching methods when teaching writing skills. Methods that I prefer while teaching writing skills are: product, process, strategic, cognitive, genre, pragmatic, process genre, and lastly concept model methods. Through applying these methods, it helps me to assess my learners understanding and progress from different angles”.

2. What are the intervention strategies you are implementing to help to solve grammatical errors? - This research question seeks to understand about various strategies employed by an educator to solve grammatical errors challenge.	"To develop my learners' writing skills, I devote much time teaching this skill in the classroom. Secondly, I expose my learners to the writing processes as outlined in Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011). Additionally, I give my learners frequent opportunities to practice this skill, meaning writing skill".
3. Do you think parents are helping learners to overcome the problem of grammatical errors? - This question sought to find out whether learners are receiving any assistance or not from their parents when they are given schoolwork to complete at home.	"Some learners are getting assistance from their parents while others are not.; I am saying this because when I give them activities to write at home, I found that some learners commit errors while others are improving. This is because some parents are literate while others are not. When I asked learners who are still struggling with grammatical errors, they indicated that their parents cannot read and write, so they are unable to assist them. Some learners indicated that they stay with their grandparents who are unable to read and write. Generally, some parents do feel obligated to attend school meetings when they are called to support their children. Due to that learners feel demotivated".
4. According to you, how can learners improve their writing skills which will help	"This can be improved if learners write essay tasks more often with efforts, and if parents, as well, assist their learners. They must also read various books written by various writers, so that they can be able to

them to solve grammatical errors? - In the above question, the researcher wants to discover what can be done to improve writing skills among learners.	spell more new words, be familiar with word division and other factors which contribute to grammatical errors".

4.3.3. Analysis of data from learners and educator responses.

The aim of this study is to examine the grammatical errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays. A qualitative research methodology was employed, incorporating structured interviews with both learners and the educator to gain insight into their experiences and the challenges they face regarding the research problem. The analysis of data revealed several key themes, including the impact of grammatical errors on creative writing, the influence of dialect on grammar, the role of social media in increasing grammatical errors and informality in educational writing, the shortage of learning materials contributing to grammatical mistakes, inadequate grammar instruction at the school level, learners' neglect of grammar learning, lack of parental involvement in learners' schoolwork, and strategies for improving learners' writing skills. All the data are discussed under these themes below:

4.3.3.1. Factors contributing to grammatical errors among learners

From learners' responses, the researcher discovered that there are many factors that contribute to grammatical errors when learners write their creative essays.

Some learners fail to recognize the importance of grammar, which may be due in part to educators neglecting grammar instruction. For example, Learners A and D, when responding to Question 1 mentioned that their educator prioritizes other aspects of language over grammar. In response to this question learner A said the following:

My educator prefers to teach other aspects than grammar rules

This view was supported by learner D when responding to the same question:

I am not aware of grammatical rules, and my educator teaches about grammar after a while

The above responses from learner A and D indicate that learners are of the view that their educator is responsible for their grammatical error challenges they experience when they write creative essays. This neglect can result in learners making grammatical errors due to the absence of consistent guidance on grammar rules and their application. The researcher believes it is crucial for educators to recognize that every aspect of language, including grammar, is allocated a specific time frame for instruction in the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). Therefore, educators should devote as much effort to teaching grammar as they do to other aspects of Tshivenda Home Language. Furtuna, Fata and Fitrisia (2016) concur with the researcher's observation when they allude that their study has some implications for language teachers. Firstly, they argue that it is necessary for educators to ensure the students' learning progress and to give appropriate feedback to the students. Also, it is important for educators to evaluate which elements of the language that the students have not gained. These, according to learners' responses, the educators are not doing in this study.

Another important factor that contributes to this problem is the learners who do not follow essay writing processes outlined by Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, which includes proofreading. This is what learner C said about this point:

After writing, I don't proofread, and this leads to unable to notice my mistakes in my essays

This response emphasizes how the writing processes as outlined by the Department of Basic Education's CAPS document (2011) are not followed.

4.3.3.2. Learners do not give themselves enough time to study grammatical rules and writing skills on their own

Learners must take and accept responsibility for their learning, and they must take initiatives and feel in control of their learning progress (Culduz, M,2024). Although educators must carry the burden of instilling discipline and independence, learners

must direct the interaction in such a way that it responds to their needs and interests. Teachers must be there to facilitate learning.

Contrary to the statement above, most learners find it difficult to learn grammar and writing skills on their own. They do not develop a sense of agency and take responsibility for their own learning. When learners hear the word grammar and writing skills, they think it is challenging and hard to learn, and feel like they must wait for an educator to scaffold them. Because of this mentality, some learners do not put effort in learning grammar rules and writing skills, while others choose to neglect them altogether. All these are corroborated by learners' responses to question 2 of this study. For example, learner A's response says:

"I only write essays when my educator asks me to, and I only hear grammatical rules when the educator is teaching. Honestly, I don't study grammatical rules and writing skills on my own.

This simply tells us that learners do not give themselves enough time to write creative essays and read anything related to grammatical rules on their own. These learners think that learning grammar is not important. According to Rossiter (2021), any form of communication, mainly written communication requires at least some comprehension of the fundamental principles of grammar rules or syntax. The author further postulates that for learners to progress beyond the basic level of expression, they need to master crucial grammatical rules and principles. The researcher believes that most of the learners are neglecting to learn grammar because educators are not motivating them enough about the importance of grammar or may be, in our case, educators are not instilling enough discipline and a sense of self-reliance among learners. Learners must not wait for the educator to learn, but they must study on their own.

4.3.3.3. The Impact of Grammatical Errors on Learners' Academic Performance

The findings of this study reveal that grammatical errors significantly hinder learners' performance, contributing to their failure in Tshivenḓa Home Language. According to Matiso, (2023), grammatical errors play a major role in learners' poor performance, particularly in essay writing. Learner **C**, when responding to question 3, said that**:**

“I write unreadable tasks which cause my work to be meaningless because of grammatical errors. An educator may not feel comfortable reading my work and as such he can give me lower scores, because, although my work might have important message, grammatical errors will make it unreadable”

Similarly, Learner E shared the same view, "I am receiving lower marks in Tshivenḓa Home Language, especially in essay writing, because of the grammatical errors I make." However, Learners A, C, and D, although their responses differ from those of Learners B and E, expressed that it is difficult to produce readable written work due to grammatical errors, which often lead to misunderstandings by people who read their creative essays. Here is how learner A responded to this question:

“To be competent in grammar helps my work in clarity and precision, to express my ideas clearly and precisely. If my grammar is riddled with errors, it will not convey the intended meaning”

From the excerpts retrieved from learners’ responses, it is evident that grammatical errors have negative impact on learners’ written work. The work is not readable and cannot convey the intended message. Consequently, learners score low marks and fail.

4.3.3.4. The effect of social media on grammatical errors

The frequent use of social media among learners has led to a rise in the use of slang and informal language, which often carries over into their academic writing, particularly in creative essays. Zaman (2022) asserts that social media plays a crucial role in communication, helping to overcome challenges of time and distance. However, Chauke (2022) highlights that social media is a significant contributor to the use of slang and broken syntax, leading to various grammatical errors that stem from social media. Research findings support the notion that social media is a major cause of these grammatical issues. For example, Learners A and C, when asked in question 4, they indicated that, "we spend more time using our cell phones on WhatsApp and Facebook." This response underscores the influence of social media on the grammatical challenges faced by learners at the selected school. Majola, Pillay and Hlongwane (2019) argue that social media utilizes a unique language style called textism, which involves shortened words, abbreviations, unconventional punctuation,

and improper capitalization. To support this view, Asiedu (2017) posits that social media appears to be a great influence of shorthand writing, which can result in bad academic writing and can affect the good production of academic writing. It is evident from what the scholars and learners are articulating that social media has a negative influence on the learners' mastery of acceptable and meaningful creative essays.

4.3.3.5 The Influence of Dialect on Tshivenḓa standard language

The use of different dialects is a significant factor contributing to grammatical errors among learners at the school in question. When individuals speak in a dialect that differs from the standard language, they may inadvertently incorporate elements from their native dialects, which can affect their grammar. When a person speaks a certain language with an influence of other languages, it can cause a challenge which may results in grammatical errors. According to Reaser and Temple Adger (2019), as quoted by Tegegne (2021), dialects or non-standard languages have their own unique sound features, lexical items and grammatical patterns. The same authors also indicated that African American dialect has trouble to write because of dialect differences. Due to this, learners will always be influenced by their own dialects when they write creative essays.

In this study, this observation was confirmed by learner C and F when they responded to question 5. They indicated that the language that they speak is influenced by Xitsonga and KheLobedu. This is because they stay next to the village populated by Xitsonga and Sepedi speaking people. Here is an excerpt from learner F:

The language that I speak have an influence of Xitsonga, this is because where I stay, our village is next to where Xitsonga speaking people stay. The name of my dialect is Tshironga and when I write essays, I also use it because this is the language I am connected to.

From this excerpt, it is evident that when two groups of people from different languages and cultures stay next to each other, it is highly possible to be influenced by another dialect. Learner C, when answering the same question, states that on his side, there is an influence of Khelobedu dialect, because where he stays, most people speak this language and even my grandmother speaks Khelobedu. According to

Rakgogo and Zungu (2022), some of the words in Khelobedu are not found in the standard Sepedi language, but instead, they are found in the standard Tshivenda language. This simply tells us that there is a connection or similarities of words between Khelobedu and Tshivenda dialect, that is why learners in the school in question are facing a challenge of writing Tshivenda standards language with an influence of Khelobedu dialect. The influence of dialect may also be caused by intra-marriage between these groups. These responses highlight the reason why some learners struggle with grammatical errors when they write their creative essays.

The researcher's understanding is that dialects must be treated like any other language. Ugorjii (2005) as quoted by Tegegne (2021) said, languages are considered as heritage of any group of people and are tools of expression of culture, as well as markers of self-image and identity. For this reason, learners' language varieties must be accommodated in our education system because there is no homogeneous class.

4.3.3.6. Inadequate Learning Material

In rural areas, many schools face challenges related to the availability of teaching and learning materials. The shortage of such resources has significantly impacted learners' performance, contributing to an increase in grammatical errors. This study's findings reveal that one of the key factors behind grammatical mistakes among learners is the lack of adequate learning resources. For example, Learner B, when responding to question 1, states that, *"I think the cause is that we don't have reading books to improve our language and grammar skills, so our teacher makes copies for us every time we are expected to learn grammar or when we learn writing skills.*" Additionally, many schools rely solely on books provided by the Department of Education, which often offer limited content. This observation is consistent with Nkgadima's (2022) study, where one participant mentioned, "There is limited information in some prescribed books, and more learning resources are needed to supplement the information found in these books." Even when books are available, they often lack comprehensive content. The educators should encourage learners to diversify their sources of information beyond prescribed textbooks. This approach can help mitigate the impact of resource shortages, enabling educators to use additional materials to enhance grammar instruction

4.3.3.7. Lack of Parental involvement in learners' schoolwork

According to Makhubele (2015), involvement of parents in learners` school activities benefit their learners in academic achievement. Most parents or guardians support their learners in school activities, whereas only few are putting efforts. When an educator was asked question 3, which sought to solicit his response on parental support, his response was:

"Some learners are getting assistance from their parents while others are not.; I am saying this because when I give them activities to write at home, I found that some learners commit errors while others are improving. This is because some parents are literate while others are not. When I asked learners who are still struggling with grammatical errors, they indicated that their parents cannot read and write, so they are unable to assist them. Some learners indicated that they stay with their grandparents who are unable to read and write".

It is evident from the educator's response that when learners stay with parents or guardians who are not literate, they will receive poor or inadequate support with their schoolwork. Furthermore, most elderly people are failing to assist them with their schoolwork as some cannot read and write (illiterate). Munje and Mncube (2018) posit that some grannies are incapable of assisting learners with their school activities and learners take schoolwork home. The educator highlighted this point when he said that generally, some parents do not feel obligated to attend school meetings when they are called to support their children. Due to this, learners feel demotivated when there is no one who values their work from home.

According to Neshakadza (2024), each learner really needs their parents, so that they can give them support in their studies and social or emotional life. Parents who assist their learners with school activities and use materials provided by their teachers to tutor them perform better than those who do not get assistance from their parents (Thomas, Muls, Kasprow, & De Backer and Lombaerts, 2020). To support the view of parental support, Walker, Dempsey and Sandler (2022) argue that parental involvement has long been believed to be associated with a range of enhanced school results for basic, middle, and high school learners, including different indicators of achievement and the development of learners' quality that support achievement such as confidence for learning. Furthermore, they postulate that although parental

involvement is an important contributor to children's positive school outcomes, much less is known about the factors that motivate parents' involvement practices.

From all these literatures above, it is evident that parental involvement is significant if learners are to achieve something meaningful in their schoolwork. From this study, the findings suggest that parents do not attend school meetings to discuss their children's future. When their children misbehave at school, they do not show any effort by visiting school, so that they can assist educators in implementing discipline among their learners. Munje and Mncube (2018) state that parental involvement is not only interpreted through financial involvement, but parents can directly be involved in social, emotional and academical needs for their children. The South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996), outlines that parents have to take responsibilities such as: supporting learning process and monitoring learners' attendance and their school work.

4.3.3.8. Strategies to improve learners' writing skills

Improvement of learners' writing skills needs commitment from both educators and learners. Educators must come up with more strategies to improve learners' writing skills. During the interview with an educator, he gave a response to question 4, and this is what he had to say:

To develop my learners' writing skills, I devote much time teaching this skill in the classroom. Secondly, I expose my learners to the writing processes as outlined in Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. Additionally, I give my learners frequent opportunities to practice this skill, meaning writing skill.

These are some of the strategies that the educator is using to mitigate the challenges of grammatical errors.

Furthermore, the educator indicates that, "parents need to help their children at home through reading them more stories from books, so that they can familiarize themselves with spellings, words division and other aspects which are contributing to grammatical errors".

4.4. DATA PRESENTATION FROM NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Non-participant observation is when someone observes a target group in their activities (Williams, 2022). The researcher used an observation schedule which assisted the researcher to get a clear picture of an educator's interaction with the learners inside the classroom.

During non-participants observation, the researcher was looking at the following aspects:

Area of observation	**Comments or notes about areas of observation**
1. Classroom Management - Seating arrangement - Noise level - Learners' participation - Classroom Crowd.	Classroom management was poor due to unorganized seating arrangement, high noise level, poor participation, overcrowded classroom and poor learners' behaviors.
2. Learning materials	There was a shortage of learning materials, and learners were sharing the little that was available which was not adequate.
3. Lesson phases progression	Educator failed to implement lesson phases progression during the lesson due to weak questioning.
4. Implementation of writing processes as outlined in the CAPS document	There was poor implementation of writing processes from CAPS documents during the lesson.

During non-participants observation, the researcher noticed that there was poor classroom management during the lesson. The school also lacks a library, meaning that there are no additional learning resources that learners can use to improve their grammar skills. The development of lessons is very poor in this school. The educator often teaches without developing a lesson plan, indicating that they are not properly prepared for class. This is confirmed when, during the lesson, an educator did not ask learners questions related to their prior knowledge. It was also observed that the

Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) and CAPS (2011) documents play a role in phases based on questions they must be asked based on grammar and creative essays writing. Furthermore, students do not take part in language enrichment activities like spelling bees, writing, or reading aloud, all of which could help them improve their grammar skills.

The following themes emerged from non-participatory observation:

4.4.1. Classroom Management

Classroom management plays a huge role in learners' performance and effective teaching. When there is poor management, the class can affect the results negatively (Taherdoost, 2022). During the observation, the researcher found out that Grade 7 educator was struggling with classroom management because of poor seating arrangement, high noise level, poor learners' participation, overcrowded classroom, and bad behavior among learners. Furthermore, there was a lack of learners' engagement or participation, because learners are not engaged and find the lesson content boring, which makes them commit disruptive behavior in the classroom. This shows that there is a lack of classroom management, and this made the lesson not deliver effectively.

During observation, the researcher observed that Grade 7 learners lost concentration because they were playful, most of them were lazy to write their school activities. Instead, they made noise while they were supposed to write down notes. Learners were arranged using seating chart during the lesson and because of this arrangement, the educator could not separate learners according to their behaviors. This is because seating chart arrangements arrange learners in alphabetical order, disregarding other contextual factors. The class was also overcrowded, and this made it impossible to manage the class because of the educator's limited mobility. Even the seating chart arrangement could not help. Gao, Rahaman, Shao and Salim (2022) state that the arrangement of seats in classrooms has been identified as a factor influencing student participation, impacting visibility, mobility, and engagement in discussions, thereby affecting student attention and academic performance,

According to Makendano, (2019) educators face classroom management challenges due to large class sizes, learners making high levels of noise during the lesson and inconsistent discipline enforcement.

4.4.2. Poor Lesson Phases progression, Active and Critical Learning during the lesson

The researcher observed that during non-participant observation, the educator was unable to conduct a lesson in a manner which starts from simple to complex or known-to-unknown. Furthermore, the researcher observed that during the lesson, the educator failed to properly implement the phases of the lesson. The educator did not ask learners prior knowledge based on the lesson, which made learners confused. During the second phase of the lesson, he did not make much effort to engage the learners. The educator asked a few formative questions. This did not help him much to manage the classroom and get the message across. The educator must ask formative questions during the second phase of his lesson to find out if learning is taking place. To support this view, Kelly (2020) states that asking questions of what learners learned assists to promote greater reflection in learning. Educators learn whether their teaching and learning strategies are assisting learners to learn. Additionally, the author posits that educators who care about what learners are learning often found informal ways to ask learners what they have learned. By orderly and thoughtfully asking learners about their learning as a normal integrated part of a lesson, educators can gain valuable feedback about any gaps in the learners' understanding of a particular topic.

The teacher's approach to the lesson about grammatical errors was very difficult for the learners, hence there was poor participation during this phase of the lesson. The educator was unable to engage learners during the lesson. Learners can be engaged through open-ended questions as a way of keeping them active. The educator was unable to assist in building learners' confidence to take responsibility for their learning and be motivated. According to Ryan (2023), active and critical learning are essential because they encourage learners to take responsibility for their own engagement by responding positively to the learning stimulus and through their participation, they are actively engaged in contributing to the learning. To support this, Nelson and Crow (2014) cited by Bean and Melzer (2021. describing active-learning exercises as

approaches that make learners more powerful thinkers and better arguers. He recommends the use of case studies, role-playing, small group work, and creative activity which stretches thinking skills that can be applied to applicable situations. The educator in the observed class did not use any of these strategies during the second phase of lesson delivery. The authors further cited Bean and Melzer (2021) alluding that the goal of the small group work is not to come up with the right answer but rather develop reasonably supported answers that learners are requested to defend later in front of the class. The strength of the active-learning classroom is that it promotes personal involvement, thereby encouraging learners into relevant discussion and evaluation. According to Meyers (1986), as cited by the same authors, an active-learning technique moves students from passive-learning to active-learning and therefore, maximizes the impact of the lesson activities.

Although the educator did not create a platform for learners to discuss among themselves, the third and final stage was handled well because the educator asked learners if they have clarity seeking questions. In addition, he gave learners class activities.

4.4.3. CAPS Document Implementation when teaching writing skills

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011) document outlines a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning writing skills in South Africa. The researcher observed that the educator was not effectively implementing the CAPS (2011) guidelines during writing instruction. Specifically, during non-participant observations, the educator failed to incorporate key aspects of the CAPS (2011) writing process, which includes essential stages such as planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and presenting. According to CAPS (2011), this systematic approach is crucial for helping learners understand the importance of each stage in developing and refining their writing, ultimately improving their communication skills.

Furthermore, the educator did not provide feedback on learners' creative essays, as evidenced by the unmarked essays the educator gave the learners during the first visits. This lack of feedback discourages learners from critically evaluating and improving their work, contributing to persistent grammatical errors in their writing. The

researcher also noted that the educator struggled to effectively integrate the different stages of the writing process into teaching.

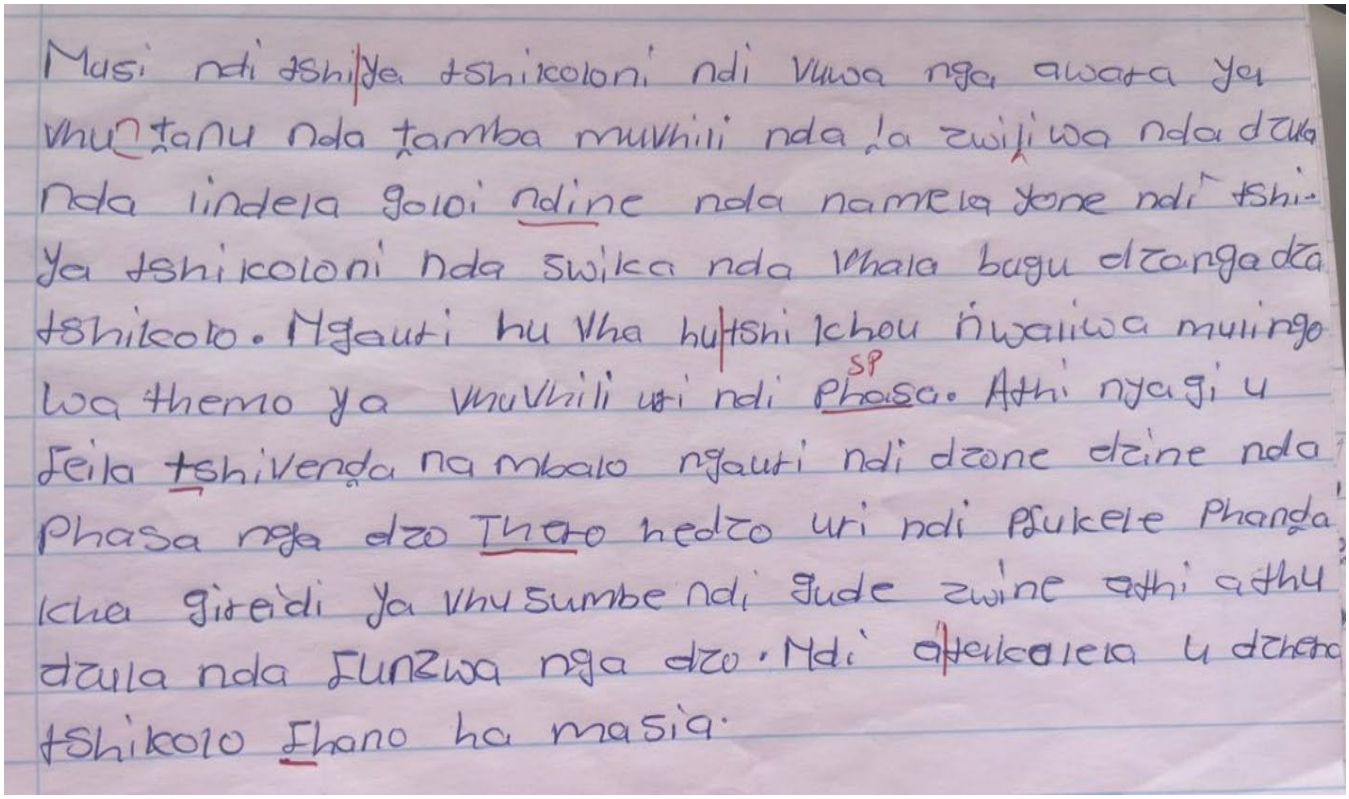
4.5. DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS (LEARNERS' CREATIVE ESSAYS)

Through analysis of creative essays, the researcher was able to support and emphasize the findings from the interview which was conducted with learners and Tshivenda educator. Analysis of documents is a procedure for evaluating or reviewing documents, which can be electronic (softcopy) or printed (hardcopy) material (Taherdoost, 2022). Document analysis is not different from other analytical methods, because it requires that data be interpreted and examined to provoke meaning, grow observed knowledge and gain understanding (Bowen, 2020). Moreover, text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher's influence are found in a document. According to Williams, Mosen and Schubert (2020) documents are `social facts`, which are shared, produced and used in a way that is socially organized. Documents analysis data presented was discussed under the following themes: wrong usage of capital letters, Punctuation (full stop, comma, and diacritical marks), word division, spelling errors, poor vocabulary, poor paragraphing structure, lack of concluding paragraph and redundancy errors.

4.5.1. **Capitalization**

Learners are unable to apply capitalization rules when they write their creative essays in Tshivenda Home Language. Applying capitalization rules requires someone to be able to start certain words, such as proper nouns and the first word in a sentence with capital letter. When writing the first word of the sentence and all proper nouns, capital letter must be used (Nia and Valizaden, 2021). Learners from the chosen school are facing challenges due to capitalization. The findings from their creative essays show that learners are struggling to use capital letters when writing proper nouns.

Example from learner F



Learner E in the above paragraph from the essay says that *“Athi ṭoḓi u feila tshivenda na mbalo ngauri ndi dzone dzine nda phasa nga dzo Thero hedzo uri ndi pfukele phanda …...),* in English this means that, *“I don’t want to fail tshivenda and maths because these are the subjects that I am supposed to pass so that I can proceed to another grade ….”.* From the above sentence, there are capitalization errors, which are as follows: the word Tshivenda and Mbalo are supposed to begin with capital letters because they are proper names. Furthermore, in this sentence there is capital error of a word “Thero” (which in English means subject) this word is in the middle of a sentence and was started with a capital letter, which is an error because it is not a proper noun and was not written at the beginning of a sentence. The researcher believes that this finding is evidence that Grade 7 learners indeed are struggling with capitalization which is one of the causes of grammatical errors. The table below presents incorrectly and correctly capitalized words from learner F example:

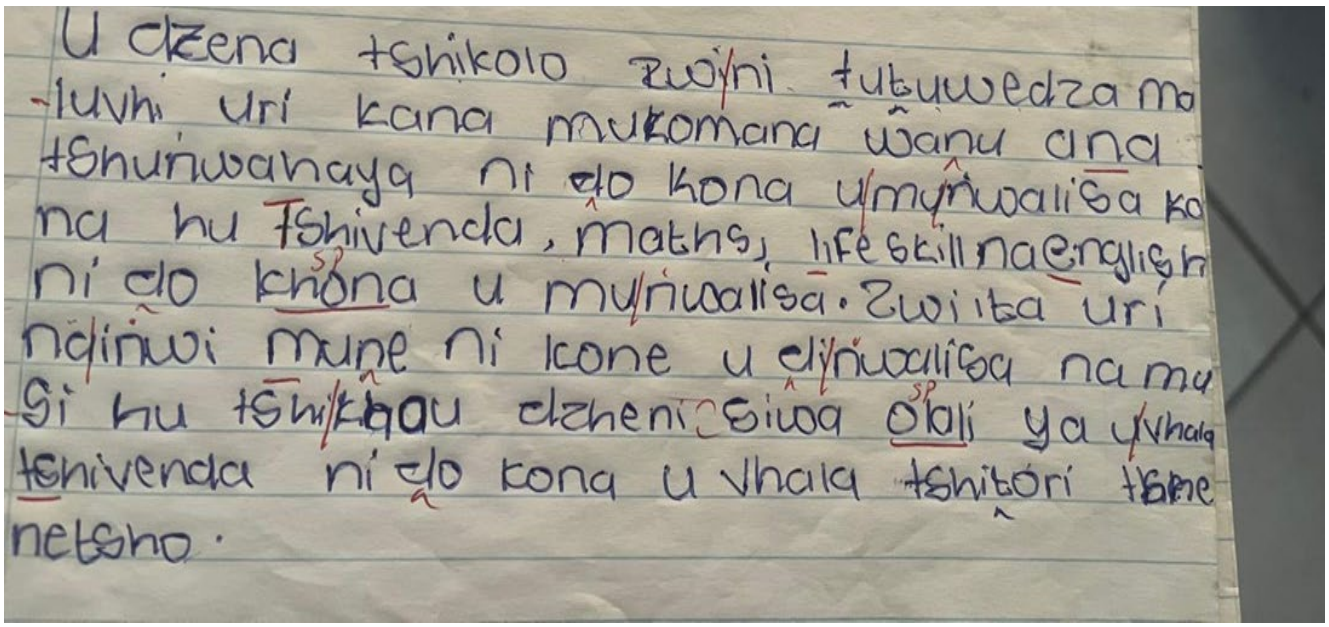
Incorrect Capitalization	The correct version
tshivenḓa	Tshikolo
Mbalo	Mbalo
Thero	Thero
Masia	Masia

Funzwa	Funzwa
Phasa	Phasa
Fhano	Fhano

4.5.3. Punctuation marks

4.5.3.1. Full stop

Grade 7 learners from the school in question are failing to use full stop correctly, which is causing one sentence to run into the next sentence. Nkgadima (2022) in his study also found that a cohort of students failed to use a full stop correctly to avoid the syntactic failure, where the first sentence runs on into the next. The author added that sentences could have been corrected by placing a full stop at the end of the sentence. In Tshivenda Home Language, if you are unable to apply full stop correctly, like what the learners are doing, it simply means that the reader would not be able to notice where the sentence ends or begins and there is a higher possibility to misunderstand the message. Although the sampled learners seem to know a full stop, the findings indicated that they are using this punctuation mark incorrectly. Learner A and E, in some paragraphs from their essays, put full stop after a long sentence, whereas, in the middle of the sentence, there is no other punctuation mark like comma. This indicates that they are not aware on how to use full stop properly.

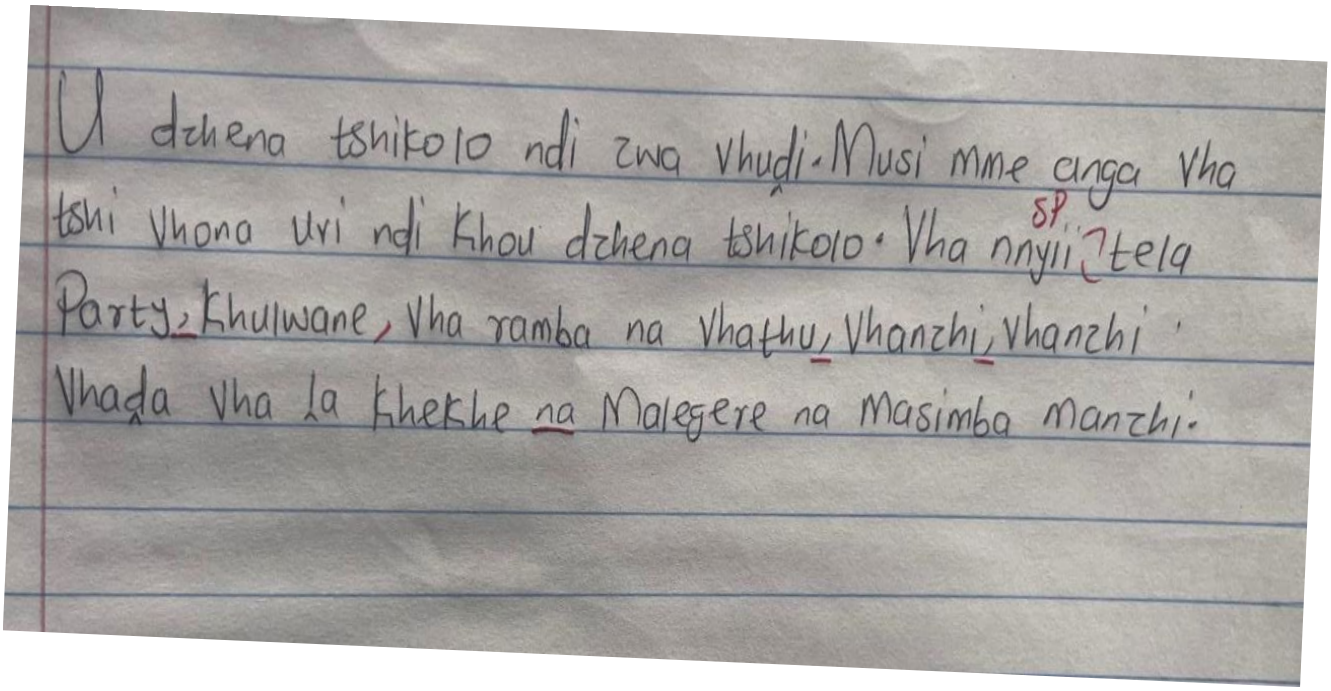


Learner A in paragraph 3 only used full stop twice and those sentences are very long in such a way that the reader can even lose the meaning of this paragraph when reading. This emphasizes that there is a huge challenge for some Grade 7 learners.

4.5.3.2. Comma

Learners are unable to use comma as a punctuation mark which separates the main clause with an introductory clause. Findings in this study revealed that learners were failing to identify areas in their writing where a comma must be mandatory. As learners are using comma incorrectly, their writings were affected, and that result in grammatical errors. Furthermore, those learners adopted conjunctions as a manner of separating clauses.

Example 1



Learner C in paragraph 3 wrote that Vha nnyi tela party, khulwane vha ramba na vhathu, vhanzhi, vhanzhi vhada vha la khekhe…) in English this means; “they organized a party for me, huge one they invited people, many, many come to eat cake and sweets and a lot of Simba chips…” The above sentence shows incorrect usage of comma. Conjugation *and* replaced a comma where a list of snacks was given. The last part of the sentence should have been like this:

Many came to eat cake, sweets and a lot of Simba chips

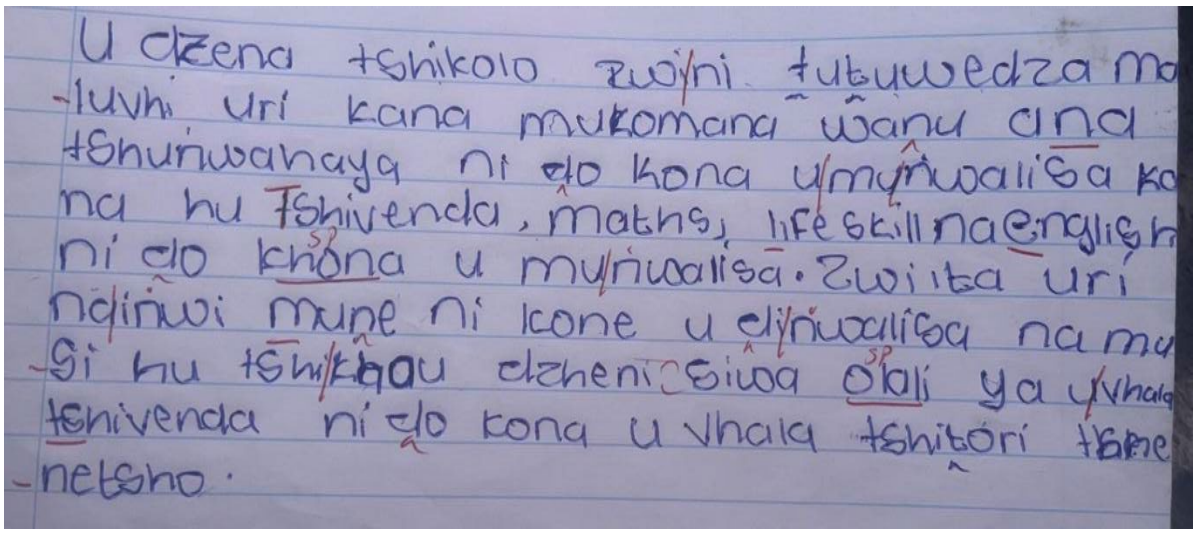
This is evidence that Learner C is not aware of how a comma should be used. The meaning of this sentence may be lost due to placing a comma in the wrong place.

4.5.4. Spelling errors

According to Kuperman, Bar-on at el (2021), spelling error is when word is spelled incorrectly according to the standard rule and accepted spelling of a language. In this study, the researcher outlined two causes of spelling errors, which are word division and diacritical marks. There are many things that constitute spelling errors, but for this study we have referred to word division and diacritical marks only:

4.5.4.1. Word division

Word division is the biggest challenge among learners. According to Carr, (2024), when there is correct word division, it makes reading easier and more accurate. Without correct word division, it is impossible to produce a good piece of work. This is because when word division is not applied correctly, the meaning of the word is changed. Selected learners in this study struggle with word division, and this results in the reader misinterpreting the message they intend to put across.



The table below presents Tshivenḓa words which show the incorrect and correct use of word division:

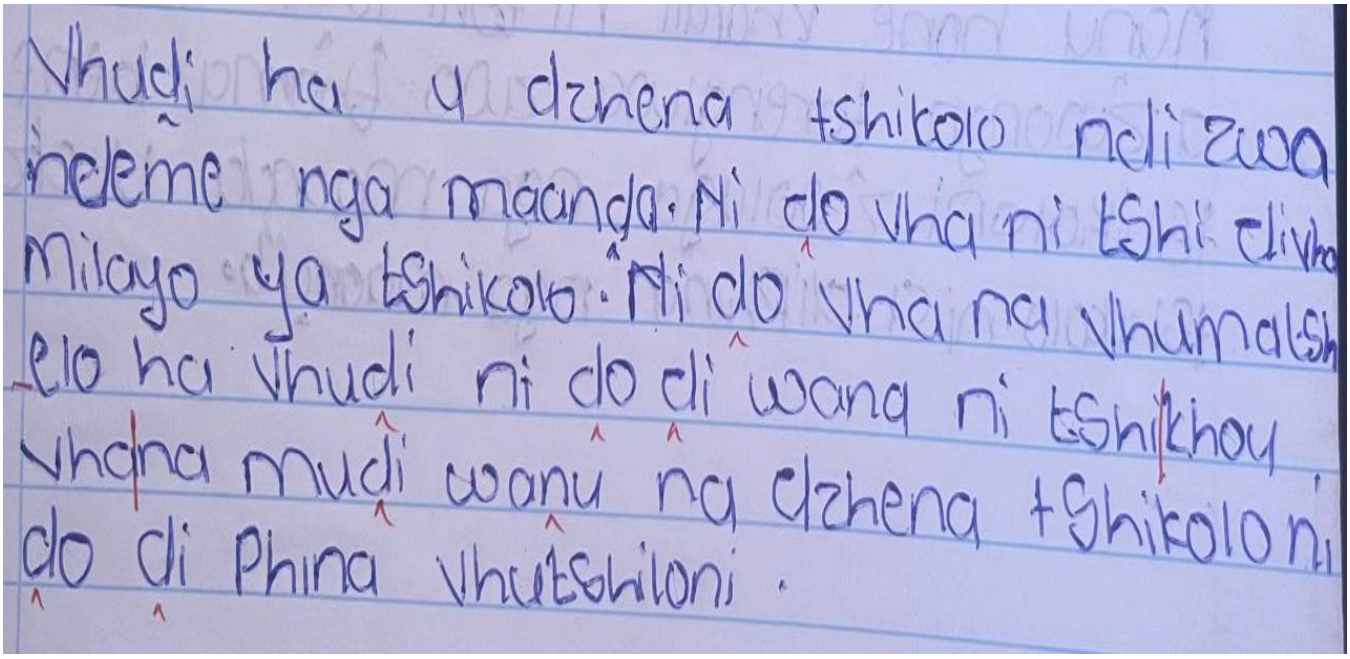
Words division applied Incorrectly	Correct form
Zwini	zwi ni
Umunwalisa	u mu ṅwalisa
Munwalisa	mu ṅwalisa
Tshikhou	tshi khou
Uvhala	u vhala
dzheni siwa	Dzhenisiwa

Although the researcher decided to quote only this learner, learners' essay scripts of all sampled learners have some words which have incorrect words division, meaning that word division is a huge challenge. This emphasizes that word division is one of the issues which are a challenge of grammatical errors among Grade 7 learners from a chosen school. The researcher believes that if they can be assisted in time, they can correct their mistakes and apply themselves correctly in word division.

4.5.4.2. Incorrect use of diacritical marks

In Tshivenda Home Language and some African languages, some of the words need to be diacritically marked. When a person fails to do that, written words become meaningless or ambiguous. The findings from learners` scripts indicate that they are struggling with diacritic markings.

Example



Learner A in paragraph 1 failed to use diacritical mark ("*Ni do vha na vhumatshelo ha vhudi ni do di wana ni tshi khou vha na mudi wanu na dzhena tshikolo ni do di phina vhutshiloni").* In this sentence, there are a lot of missing diacritical marks.

The table below represents some words with and without diacritical marks:

Diacritical mark incorrectly used	**Correct version of diacritical mark**
Do	ḓo
Vhudi	vhuḓi
Mudi	muḓi
Wanu	waṉu
Di	ḓi
di phina	ḓiphiṉa

4.5.7. Poor Paragraphing Structure

When learners are involved in writing creative essays, they are supposed to plan their work progressively and must have a clear understanding of what they are writing. To do this, learners must plan their work by drawing a proper mind-map that will show how their essays will progress from the introductory paragraph, body and ending

paragraph. Wang and Xie (2022) concur with the idea of writing mind-map before writing creative essays. They posit that there are several ways that educators use to extend ideas on how to plan essays, and mind mapping is one of the techniques that the learners are advised to use to design and plan their ideas. The plan must outline how writing will progress.

Learners must write a captivating introductory paragraph, the body with different paragraphs with coherent and logical ideas. Equally, the concluding paragraph must include a provocative statement from the body as they synthesize their ideas. In the study we have undertaken, it is evident that learners are struggling with paragraphing. The example that has been given below shows that there is no captivating introductory paragraph. Wang and Xie (2022) argue that *without a proper introductory paragraph, the whole essay is compromised. Consequently, it is critical to compose and develop clear ideas as a general statement in the introductory paragraph, concrete momentum for developing ideas in the ensuing content paragraphs. Conspicuously, an introductory paragraph's quality can dictate the essay's overall quality.*

An example that shows poor paragraphing is presented below:

Vhuḓi ha u dzhena Tshikolo

Mme ndi khou toḓa u Vha dokotela ndi tshi thedza tshikolo. Ndi toḓa u laFha Vhalwa dce Vha Shango lo hashu na maiwe mashango. Ndi khou toḓo uri mme anga na kotsi anga Vha takale ndo bvelela nga u Vha dokotela. Ndi ḓo thata nnḓu khulu ine a i athu u thatiwa hatha shangoni la la hashu, ndea dzhia lia na mashaka anga a ḓa-

a dzula hatha ndini yanga. Ndi tshi dzhena tshikolo ndi ḓo wana zwithu zwinzhi zwo Vhuḓi. ndi ḓo Vha na tshelede nnzhi nda kona u rengela Vhathu Vha hashu zwiliwa na zwiambaro. ndi ḓo kona u Vha na muḓi wanga nda dzula na Vhanga Vhanga Ndo takala ngauri ndi ḓo Vha ndi na tshelede dzanga. ndi ḓo ita zwithu nda

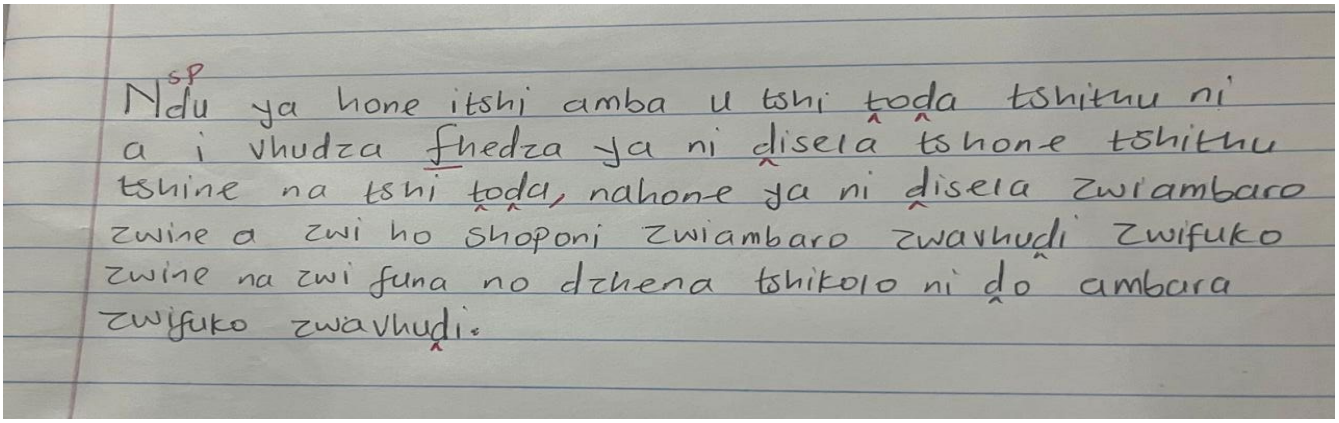
Kona u renga dzigoloi dza Vhuḓi khulwane nda namedza na Vhabebi Vhanga. Mme anga ndi ḓo Vha thodela mushumi ane a/ḓo Vha itela zwithu zwothe bulasi Vho dzuka. Vhabebi Vhanga Vha ḓo li lima ~~Vha renga na~~ Vha thola na Vhathu Vhanzhi Vhane Vhane Vha ḓo Shuma Vha ita tshelede. Kho tsi anga ndi ḓo Vha rengela hulashi li hulu. Ndo jena tshikolo ndi ḓo kona u tshimbila mashango manzhi ndi tshi khou ḓi Phina na muta wanga ndi ḓo renga na zwiambaro/zwinzhi zwine nda ḓo ambala Vhathu Vha tamela. ndi ḓo la zwiliwa nda zwi re na mutakalo nahone ri Sa lwadze.

From this example, it is evident that there is no captivating introductory paragraphing, and this has determined the quality of the whole essay, the organizing of which is poor. The body is not divided into paragraphs, each with a strong idea. Moreover, there is an overrun of paragraphs. All these depict an incoherent creative essay. The concluding paragraph is also not provocative enough and has not summarized anything.

4.5.8. **Redundancy errors**

According to Merriam (2024), redundancy is when two or more words are used together that mean the same thing

The findings from this study indicate that learners are committing redundancy errors in their essays writing. This is causing a challenge because during writing, especially in an essay, every word should add something new in that piece of work.



The findings in the above paragraph from this study reveal that Learner G is struggling with this redundancy because in Paragraph 2 it is said" … *nahone ya ni ḓisela zwiambaro zwine a zwi ho shoponi zwiambaro zwavhuḓi zwifuko zwine na zwi funa no dzhena tshikolo ni ḓo ambara zwifuko zwavhuḓi"*, in English, this simply means that "… *and you will get clothes which are not in store clothes which are beautiful clothes which you like as you will be educated"*. In this case, this error was committed by the repetition of same word using different words. The word "zwiambaro and zwifuko" means same thing which in English means clothes.

4.6. **Conclusion**

Chapter four is one of the fundamental chapters in this research study because it analyzes all collected data, so that conclusions can be reached. In this chapter, the researcher analyzed data collected from different participants. All data were collected from nine sampled learners and one Tshivenḓa Home Language educator. The aim of this research was to investigate grammatical errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays. The research findings were presented based on the results obtained from the Interview, documents review and non-participant observation. The researcher used thematic analysis for interview and non-participant observation. Furthermore, content analysis was used to analyze documents review. The findings from interviews, documents review, and non-participant observation were presented and analyzed. The findings were discussed under various themes, and it was discovered that grammatical errors are associated with many factors, like, for example, educators neglecting to teach grammar aspects of language learning, shortage of resources, negative influence of social media and many other factors. The subsequent chapter presents a summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

5. CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This study on Grammatical Errors made by Grade 7 Learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays at Sekgosese North Circuit, Vhembe West District, Limpopo Province, South Africa, was probed pertaining its aim and objectives originally outlined in the research proposal. These research objectives are outlined in the subsequent section. The data that were collected through interview, observation and document review are presented in chapter 4. This chapter presents the summary of this research's findings, recommendations and conclusions.

5.2 Summary of the research findings

This study is grounded and explored through the research aim and research objectives, as they originally appear in the proposal document. All the data collected were presented, analyzed and discussed in chapter 4. This chapter presents a summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions.

Aim:

- To explore grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays.

The aim of this study was underpinned by the following research objectives:

- To identify the types of written grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays.
- To establish whether educators apply the main principles of CAPS policy when teaching writing skills.
- To determine the causes of grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 Tshivenda Home Language learners.
- To recommend ways in which Grade 7 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners can improve their writing skills.

5.3. Summarizing research findings

The purpose of this study was to find out the full inferences of grammatical errors made by Grade 7 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners of a selected school. The analysis of the research findings in chapter 4 are summarized below:

Grammatical errors commonly committed by Grade 7 learners when they are writing creative essays have been identified from all methods used to collect data. The findings revealed that learners are committing various grammatical errors such as incorrect use of capital letters, punctuation marks such as full stop, comma and the failure to use diacritical marks. Moreover, learners at a selected school are facing a challenge of using capital letters incorrectly and failing to start the sentence with capital letters. Furthermore, others were writing common nouns in the middle of sentences using capital letters. For punctuation, learners were unable to utilize comma correctly when they were supposed to indicate separation of independent clauses and to separate a list of items. Lastly, spelling errors were also prevalent among learners, where diacritical marks and word division were the most visible challenges on record. All this research findings outlined above positively respond to the first objective of this research, which was to identify the types of written grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS, 2011) document outlines a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning writing skills in South Africa. The researcher observed that the educator was not effectively implementing the CAPS guidelines during writing instruction. Specifically, during non-participant observations, the educator failed to incorporate key aspects of the CAPS writing process, which include essential stages such as planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and presenting. According to CAPS, this systematic approach is crucial for helping learners understand the importance of each stage in developing and refining their writing, ultimately improving their communication skills. The information above positively responded to the second objective which sought to establish whether educators apply the main principles of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement policy when teaching writing skills.

The study's findings outline that learners are undermining Tshivenḓa Home Language as a subject they are learning at school. During the interview, other participants indicated that they do not see any need to study this subject because it is one of the simplest subjects. Parents also do not help their children with schoolwork, and this is a contributing factor. The shortage of Tshivenda Home Language learning materials is one of the contributing factors of grammatical errors found in this study. We heard that learners were sharing books. Moreover, there is no school or community library. This means that those learners who would like to study grammatical aspects from home could not do so.

The findings of this study also present evidence that learners' participation during lesson delivery is very poor. In this study, it is revealed that during lesson delivery, some learners were making noise while few were paying attention. The findings also revealed that learners were difficult to manage when their educator was delivering grammar lessons. This problem impacts even those learners who were trying to pay attention during the lesson.

The study also revealed that learners are experiencing grammatical errors because of the influence of dialect. There is an influence of Khelobedu and Tshironga dialects over Tshivenḓa Home Language. Some learners use these dialects at home, but at school they are required to use standard language, and therefore, this poses a challenge.

The findings also indicate that learners invest their time in social media instead of studying. This makes the grammatical error challenge even worse because the language that is used in social media is informal and does not follow grammatical rules. The summary of the research findings listed above responds to the third research objective which was to determine the causes of grammatical errors committed by Grade 7 Tshivenda Home learners

Data collected from educators` responses recommend that for Grade 7 Tshivenda Home Language learners to improve their writing skills, they should always be given creative essay writing tasks.

The findings also indicate that learners should get help from their parents, meaning that caregivers need to assist their learners with school activities.

Reading various books can also improve skills in writing and prepare learners to be familiar with spellings and word division.

Conducting extra-learning activities and providing extended learning opportunities will improve learning writing skills and grammatical challenges. The summary above responds to the fourth and last objective of this research which was to recommend ways in which Grade 7 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners can improve their writing skills.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations outlined below are based on the findings of this research:

5.4.1. Establishing a School Library

Learners should have access to a library that includes a variety of Tshivenda Home Language books. Due to differing backgrounds, many learners face challenges in acquiring additional resources on their own. A library would provide access to both physical and digital books, which may otherwise be unaffordable. This resource would be valuable for learners to explore different language styles that are academically acceptable, aiding them in writing essays and engaging in other school activities.

5.4.2. Participation in Enrichment Activities

Learners' involvement in language enrichment activities such as spelling bees, essay writing, and reading aloud competitions, can be beneficial for their academic growth. These activities can motivate learners to write independently, enhance their creativity, and help them generate original ideas. In a spelling bee, learners will not only practice spelling but also learn new words. During essay writing, they will apply these words in

constructing sentences and paragraphs while focusing on punctuation. As a result, learners will experience a reduction in grammatical errors or at least show progress in overcoming this challenge. These activities also encourage learners to differentiate between formal and informal language, while emphasizing the importance of grammatical rules.

5.4.3. Installing Grammar Apps on Learners' Smartphones

In today's digital age, smartphones are essential tools for learners. Installing grammar apps such as grammar checkers on their devices can help them identify spelling and grammatical errors while typing messages. This will improve their grammatical skills and allow them to better understand common errors in academic writing. The feedback provided by these apps will help learners recognize and correct their mistakes, ultimately assisting them in constructing grammatically correct sentences.

5.4.4. Parental or Guardian Involvement in Learners' Education

Parents must be involved in helping educators to shape the future of their children by attending all meetings when they are required to. Moreover, when children come back home with homework, they must help them or solicit help for their learner.

Parents should also create a study forum where learners are grouped together and monitored while studying. As primary learners, this can take place during weekends or school holidays. Parents can designate a suitable space for the learners to study as a group; while developing a schedule to ensure they are actively engaged in their learning. This collaborative effort will support the learners' educational progress.

5.4.5. Introducing Extra Lessons

Offering extra lessons alongside additional school activities can be highly beneficial for learners struggling with grammatical challenges. Educators can dedicate extra time to these learners, fostering communication with their parents to ensure support both at school and at home. Extra lessons require cooperation between parents and educators, with parents actively participating and investing in any necessary forms of assistance for their learners.

5.4.6. Implementing Drop All and Read (DER) Program

The researcher recommends that for Grade 7 learners to overcome the challenge of grammatical errors, they must start to take drop all and read programs (DER) seriously.

5.5. Recommendations for further studies

Language learning involves four interconnected skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. A deficiency in one skill can negatively impact the others in the learning process. Some argue that it is impossible for a learner to write effectively without a solid understanding of reading, suggesting that reading plays a crucial role in learning. This study focused on the grammatical errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing creative essays. Given the interconnectedness of speaking and writing skills, the researcher recommends that future studies explore the impact of speaking skills on writing proficiency.

Additionally, a lack of adequate grammar instruction during the foundation phase can contribute to grammatical errors as learners advance to the Intermediate, Senior, or FET phases. The relationship between these errors and insufficient grammar education in the early years was not addressed in this study, and therefore, the researcher suggests that future research should examine this issue. Such studies could help identify strategies to address these challenges and improve language education moving forward.

5.6. CONCLUSION

The chapter started by introducing the purpose of this chapter and went on to summarize the research findings by subjecting them to the research objectives as outlined in the original proposal of this research. After summarizing the findings, the researcher made some few recommendations that can assist in improving the negative outlook of Grade 7 learners' grammatical prowess. The recommendations were outlined as a way of coming up with solutions to the research problem. Furthermore, the recommendations were also made for further studies, where the researcher recommended that future studies explore the impact of speaking skill on writing skill. Furthermore, the researcher recommended that insufficient grammar education in the foundation phase be investigated as well.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Ethical clearance letter from University of Limpopo

Appendix B. Letter asking permission to the Department of Education

P.O.Box 96

Tshimbupfe

0983

30 October 2023

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Attention: Relevant LDoE officials

30 October 2023

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Miss Nemathithi Sandani a master`s student at the University of Limpopo and a Tshivenda educator at school in question under Sekgosese North circuit in Vhembe West district, hereby request for permission to visit school in question to conduct my study, specifically to collect data.

Study`s title is "**Grammatical Errors made by Grade 7 learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language creative Essays at Sekgosese North Circuit, Vhembe West District Limpopo Province, South Africa".** The study will be conducted under the supervision of Mr Mandoma T.J.

For any enquiry, please contact me at: 076 693 6506 or email me at nemathithisandi@gmail.com

Researchers` signature

Thank you in advance

Yours sincerely

Nemathithi S

Appendix C: Letter granting permission from Department of Education

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 2/2/2 Enq: Makola MC Tel No: 015 290 9448 E-mail:MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Nemathithi S
P O Box 96
Tshimbupfe
0983

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal; **"Grammatical Errors made by Grade 4 Learners when writing Tshivenda Home Language Creative Essays at Sekgosese North Circuit, Vhembe West District Limpopo Province, South Africa."**

3. The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the School concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.

3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

Cnr 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X 9489, Polokwane, 0700
Tel:015 290 7600/ 7702 Fax 086 218 0560

The heartland of Southern Africa-development is about people

4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

Mashaba KM
DDG: CORPORATE SERVICES

13/11/2023
Date

Cnr 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X 9489, Polokwane, 0700
Tel:015 290 7600/ 7702 Fax 086 218 0560

Appendix D: Ethical clearance letter from Limpopo provincial ethics committee

CONFIDENTIAL

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

TO: DR MC MAKOLA

FROM: PROF I SWARTS

CHAIRPERSON: LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (LPREC)

REVIEW DATE: 27 NOVEMBER 2023

SUBJECT: GRAMMATICAL ERRORS MADE BY GRADE 7 LEARNERS WHEN WRITING TSHIVENḐA HOME LANGUAGE CREATIVE ESSAYS AT SEKGOSESE NORTH CIRCUIT, VHEMBE WEST DISTRICT LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.

RESEARCHER: NEMATHITHI S

Dear Colleague

The above researcher's research proposal served at the Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC). The committee is satisfied with the methodological and ethical soundness of the study.

Decision: The proposal is granted full approval.

Regards

Chairperson: Prof I Swarts

Swarts

Secretariat: Ms J Mokobi

Date: 18/04/2024

Appendix E: Limpopo provincial research ethics committee clearance certificate.

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LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

Office of the Premier

Research and Development Directorate

Private Bag X9483, Polokwane, 0700, South Africa

Tel: (015) 230 9910, Email: mokobij@premier.limpopo.gov.za

LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS

COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Review Date: 27 November 2023

Project Number: LPREC/190/2023: PG

Subject: Grammatical Errors Made by Grade 7 Learners when Writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays at Sekgosese North Circuit, Vhembe West District Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Researcher: Nemaththi S

Chairperson: Prof I Swarts

Swarts

Chairperson: Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee

The Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC) is registered with National Health Research Council (NHREC) Registration Number **REC-111513-038.**

Note:

i. **This study is categorized as a Low Risk Level in accordance with risk level descriptors as enshrined in LPREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

ii. **Should there be any amendment to the approved research proposal; the researcher(s) must re-submit the proposal to the ethics committee for review prior data collection.**

iii. **The researcher(s) must provide annual reporting to the committee as well as the relevant department and also provide the department with the final report/thesis.**

iv. **The ethical clearance certificate is valid for 12 months. Should the need to extend the period for data collection arise then the researcher should renew the certificate through LPREC secretariat. PLEASE QUOTE THE PROJECT NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.**

Appendix F: Letter of informed consent forms

CONSENT FORMS

INFORMED CONSENT:

1. The educator will be given a consent form written in English for permitting the researcher to interview him as the subject educator.

2. The parents/guardians of Grade 7 sampled learners will receive consent forms written in Tshivenda for asking permission by the researcher so that she can interview and review learners` essay written scripts. Also, learners will receive assent forms written in Tshivenda which they need to sign as a way of agreeing to be a part of this study after their parents or guardians have given them permission by signing consent forms.

   The following are the consent forms that will be given to the educator, parents/guardians of sampled learners and Assent forms for learners as well.

Appendix G: Consent form for Teacher

Consent form for Teacher

I understand that my participation in this study will involve:

•Taking part in an interview with Miss Nemathithi S, in which he/she will be asking questions about my views on grammatical errors written by grade 4 learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays.

•During this interview notes will be taken, and the interviews will be recorded for later transcription. The interview will be fully anonymized when transcribed then after the audio files will be also destroyed.

•I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that he/she can withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason.

•I understand that my participation will be treated confidentially, and all information will be stored anonymously and securely. All information appearing in the final report will be anonymous.

•I also understand that at the end of the study, I will be provided with additional information and feedback about the purpose of the study.

I, _____ consent to Ms Nemathithi S proceeding with this study.

Signature of Educator: …… Date: ……

Appendix H: Consent form for Parent

FOMO YA THENDELO YA MUBEBI KANA MUUNḐI.

Nṋe _____ mubebi/muunḓi wa _____

ndi ṋea thendelo ya uri ṅwana`nga ane a vha kha Gireidi ya vhusumbe (7) a vhe tshipiḓa

tsha ṯhoḓisiso, a ṋee mafhungo a no ḓo thusa kha ṯhoḓisiso iyi. Ndi a pfesesa uri ṯhoḓisiso iyi a i na mbuyelo nahone a si ya u ṯoḓa u dzhenisela nwana`nga kana tshikolo maṱo. Ndi dovha hafhu nda zwi ḓivha uri madzina a ṅwana`nga a nga si bviselwe khagala na zwe a amba zwi ḓo vha tshipiri tshi re vhukati hawe na muṱoḓisisi.

Ndi na fhulufhelo ḽa uri ṯhoḓisiso ino i ḓo thusa zwihulu uri kuphasele kwa vhagudi, ro sedza thero ya Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani, hu ḓo khwinifhadzea.

Tsaino ya mubebi/muunḓi: _____ Datumu: _____

Appendix I: Assent form for Learners

ASENTE FOMO YA MUGUDI

Nṋe _____ (Mugudi), ndi khou tenda u vha tshipiḓa tsha ṱhoḓisiso ino ine ya khou amba nga vhukhakhi ha girama vhune ha itwa nga vhagudi vha Gireidi ya vhusumbe (7) musi vha tshi ṅwala maanea a Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani kha tshikolo tshino. Ṱhoḓisiso ino i khou itwa nga Vho Nemathithi S.

Ndi khou tenda uri mafhungo oṱhe aṋe nda ḓo ṋea Vho Nemathithi S a ḓo vha a tshidzumbe nahone a si ḓivhee, a thina ndavhelelo ya u wane malamba kha u ṋekedza mafhungo ayo kana u dzhenelela kha ṱhoḓisiso ino.

Ndi a zwi ḓivha uri u vha tshipiḓa tsha ṱhoḓisiso ino ndi khou tou ḓiṋekedzela, nahone ndi nga kha ḓi ḓibvisa tshifhinga tshiṅwe na tshiṅwe kha ṱhoḓisiso ino hu si na ndaṱiso.

Tsaino ya Mugudi: _____ Datumu: _____

Appendix J: Interview questions for Learners and teacher.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

One Tshivenda Home Language educator will be interviewed and nine sampled learners from Grade 7 school in question. During the interview all information will be written down and also recorded using audio recorder. The researcher will use structured interview. The interview questions for learners are in African language which is Tshivenda and for educator all questions are in English language.

MBUDZISO DZA VHAGUDI

a. Ni vhona u nga ndi zwifhio zwivhangi zwa vhukhakhi ha girama musi ni tshi ṅwala maaṉea a vhusiki?
b. Ni a vhuya na ḓimanḓafhadza nga u guda milayo ya girama na u nwala maanea a vhusiki ṅwala maanea a vhusiki a Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani ni noṯhe?
c. Ndi afhio masiandaitwa a no vhangwa nga vhukhakhi ha girama musi ni tshi ṅwala maaṉea a vhusiki?
d. Ndi zwifhio zwiṅwe zwiitisi zwi no ita uri ni ite vhukhakhi ha girama?
e. Luambo lune vhone vha amba lu na thuthuwedzo naa ya dzinwe nyambo kana lwavho luambo ndi Tshivenda tsha siṱandadi?

MBUDZISO DZA MUGUDISI (INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATOR)

a. How do you teach Tshivenḓa Home Language writing skills?

b. What are the intervention strategies you are implementing to help to solve grammatical errors?

c. Do you think parents are helping learners to overcome the problem of grammatical errors?

d. According to you, how can learners improve their writing skills which will help them to solve grammatical errors?